

The Spire



January 2016

Loch Raven United Methodist Church

Confirmation 2016

CONFIRMATION CLASSES will begin Sunday, February 14th, at 9:00 AM during the Sunday school hour. If you have a child aged 12-18 (6th through 12th grade) who wants to confirm their faith and become a full member of Loch Raven UMC please contact the church office to register them or if you have any questions. Classes will run for 12 weeks. We will not have class on Easter or Mother's Day. We will receive the confirmands into membership on Pentecost Sunday on May 15th.

Pastor Cliff



Time for Sunday School and Fellowship Time Will Be Changing

Beginning January 3:

Sunday School (for all ages)

9:00 – 9:45 AM

Fellowship Time—immediately following the worship service

New Year's Encouragement

The New Year provides us an opportunity to look back on what God has brought us through. It also provides the opportunity to allow God to guide us into the future. We have a wonderful God who helps us through the ups and downs of life. Here are some reminders from the Bible about how God works with us:

We say: "It's impossible"

God says: "All things are possible" (Luke 18:27)

We say: "I'm too tired"

God says: "I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28-30)

We say: "Nobody really loves me"

God says: "I love you" (John 3:16 and 13:34)

We say: "I can't go on"

God says: "My grace is sufficient" (II Corinthians 12:9, Psalms 91:15)

We say: "I can't figure things out"

God says: "I will direct your steps" (Proverbs 3:5-6)

We say: "I can't do it"

God says: "You can do all things" (Philippians 4:13)

We say: "I can't forgive myself"

God says: "I forgive you" (I John 1:9 and Romans 8:1)

We say: "I'm always worried and frustrated"

God says: "Cast all your cares on Me" (I Peter 5:7)

We say: "I'm not smart enough"

God says: "I give you wisdom" (I Corinthians 1:30)

We say: "I feel all alone"

God says: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5)

I can go on, but you get the picture. Have a wonderful New Year. May the peace of God be with you.

Pastor Cliff

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The Spire is published monthly (except July and August) by Loch Raven United Methodist Church, 6622 Loch Raven Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21239.

All signed articles, letters, announcements, and other information of interest are welcomed and considered for publication.

The deadline for the February issue is **Sunday, January 10, at 11:00 a.m.** *Electronic Submission:* You may send articles by e-mail to: njk.williams@yahoo.com or place articles in the Church Office's newsletter box.

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Pastor - Cliff Webner

Pastor of Congregational Care - Wayne Harting

Church Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. *Phone:* 410-825-0900. *Fax:* 410-825-2600. *E-mail:* Info@LRUMC.org

Change of Name/Address - Call, mail or e-mail church office

Website: www.LRUMC.org

Visit us on Facebook.

It's a New Year

As we start 2016, please discard your 2015 Offering Envelopes. Your tithes/offerings are recorded on the date received, not the date on your envelopes. Also, your number may have changed for the new year. So, please begin using your 2016 envelopes after January 1. If you have not picked up your new envelopes, they are available in the arcade.

Thank you,
Financial Assistants

Mark Your Calendar—Church Planning Session

Saturday, January 23

9:00AM – 12:00PM

All are welcome.

Join us as we finalize our church goals for 2016, brainstorm ways to achieve them, and set realistic action plans.

Share your ideas.

How can we help meet your needs?

How can we re-energize our membership?

How can we better engage with our community?

Got some fundraising ideas?

Let's Rethink Church—remember:

We express our love for God through **active** discipleship.

Church is about **sharing God's love** by offering hope and healing to those looking for more meaning in their lives.

Acts of personal faith and public worship help us grow closer to God, but we also grow in our faith by **taking action outside the church walls** to help others.

Church doesn't just happen when we are sitting in the pew.

Church happens when we reach out to others.

When we work together, when we stand together, when we open our hearts to those who are struggling, that's **putting our beliefs into action.**

Merrill Harrison
Church Council Chair

Musical Notes

It's hard to believe 2016 is already upon us. Reflecting upon what we've been through this past year I can't help but think that God has been good to us. As many of you recall, last year we lost our beloved organist, Sally Tarr, and our Pastor Cliff was sidelined due to his illness. It definitely has been a blessing to witness Loch Raven UMC pull through these tough times and as I look around today our church seems brighter and stronger than ever before.

I want to give thanks to all those that have participated in our Music Ministry this past year. Special thanks goes out to Cathy Miles and the Handbell Choir. The dedication they bring each week and the joyous sounds that they make are always inspirational. Also special thanks to Patti Gould, our Organist, without whom I could not do my job. Lastly, thanks to all the beautiful people in our Chancel Choir. It is truly a privilege to stand in front of you and sing together each week. I hope and pray 2016 will be filled with greater joy and love from our God.

Sincerely,
Sam Chin



Arts Festival Year #4

By: Debi Wynn

Many thanks to Loch Raven artists who shared their talents at the Loch Raven Festival of the Arts and to the church members who supported this church fundraising event with their attendance, hot dog eating and auction bidding. Church members Cecilia Miller, Adelaide Wilson and Jonathan Wilson each provided one of the paintings they created as part of a social group painting session. Cecilia took brush to canvas with a friends group and the Wilsons were inspired for their art subjects when their family attended a paint workshop together. As these group painting sessions brought out untapped creativity for these folks, perhaps a session could be offered here at Loch Raven. Anyone interested in planning a Loch Raven paint party please contact me. The IMPROVE after school program based here at the church participated in the Festival for another year with artistic creations by Director Viola Watson. Her daughter, Morgan Bean, showcased her talent for fashion design with a panel display of her drawings.

If you did not attend this year's Festival, you missed a golden opportunity for Christmas shopping with three new Festival participants. Artist/crafter Alice McGee's tables were filled with her unique crafts including designer tissue boxes. These box covers cleverly transform the boxes of tissues into themed art for the living room, bedroom or wherever those tissue boxes are set in a home. From pet-themed to flower-themed her box covers are wonderful pieces for giving someone with a cold a smile when they reach for a tissue for their sneezes. Alice also creates inspiration messages for the wall hangings, note paper and T-shirts she designs.

As the realm of antiques includes artistic expression, I opened the showcasing/selling to folks with antiques. I visited Century Antiques located at 1704 Taylor Avenue after stopping by the convenience store next to this shop when I saw the door open. I was amazed at this gem of a shop I pass on a regular basis. From the storefront this shop looks to be tiny, but when you enter you discover several rooms filled with vintage housewares, art, furnishings, clothing, music and an array of interesting items. I immediately thought of the Arts Festival. I talked with owner Lynn Young about the Festival and I was very pleased she attended our event. For the Festival, she set up tables of jewelry (an art form with various designs), vintage Christmas items and other antiques, only a few of the many items she has available in her lovely store. If you are in search of a special gift for someone, please stop into this shop. And be sure to mention to Lynn you are from LRUMC.

Hillendale resident Lily Rowe set up sales tables of beautiful settings of her glassware, including Egyptian glassware, complete with lit candles available for purchase that would make a festive table for holiday and dinner parties. The colors and shine of her various place settings and serving pieces provided for a lovely artistic glow.

Cathy Miles and ringers of the Memorial Handbell Choir provided a wonderful performance at the Loch Raven Festival of the Arts, and I appreciate these musicians learning bell songs outside of the realm of worship music for playing at this event. Their playing of "Over the Rainbow" was beautiful! *Towson Times* reporter Barbara Pash was on the scene for research as she was writing an article on handbell choirs. There is no better research than being at the bell ringer table, and before the concert was over she was recruited to experience bell ringing from the ringer's music stand. Many thanks to Ms. Pash for including the Memorial Handbell Choir in her article. Her visit highlighted the fact that our bell choir is in its 42nd year of ringing for our worship services.

Missions *In Action*
Church World Service Blankets+ Program
Join together in reaching out to neighbors in need the world over.

We are designating January 31 as **Blanket Sunday**, this special giving opportunity will help provide hope in the form of blankets to survivors of storms, earthquakes and other disasters.

For 70 years, the Church World Service Blankets+ Program has recognized that the smallest, simplest things can make a major difference in the daily life and future of adults and children worldwide. Blankets+ helps to provide:

- Blankets, tents, food and other emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster;
- Tools and seeds for refugees returning home to replant their fields;
- Wells for families living in drought prone areas to provide clean, safe water to drink and to irrigate crops and gardens;
- Literacy training and microcredit for women struggling to realize their potential.

Join hands and hearts with other Christians in response to Jesus' call to feed the hungry, quench the thirsty, and shelter the homeless children of God.

UMCOR Advance #982810

Upcoming and Ongoing Mission Opportunities:

Manna House Breakfast Club – **Jan. 9, Mar. 19, and May 14** (If you would like to volunteer to help prepare or serve breakfast, contact Myra Wagner: 410-825-0900, 410-485-7607 or mbwagner@lrumc.org.)

To help better serve food-starved individuals in our community, we will be collecting specific, non-perishable food items monthly for **ACTC** – *stock up on sale items!*

- January—Pasta Meals
- February—Potatoes (canned or boxed)
- March—Spaghetti Sauce

Monetary collection for **Blanket Sunday** — **January 31**

Collection of hotel-size toiletries for Essex UMC. *There is a box for the items on the hospitality desk. This is an on-going collection*

Sandwich making for Essex UMC 3rd or 4th Tuesday of every month

United Methodist Women—End of Year Giving 2015

Thanks to all who supported the United Methodist Women during 2015 with your pledges and support of our various fundraising projects. As a result, UMW was able to donate a total of \$3,400 to the following organizations:

Board of Child Care Auxiliary	\$300
Essex UMC— <i>Table of Grace</i>	\$500
Quality of Life Retreats	\$100
Manna House	\$500
Assistance Center of Towson Churches	\$500
Ellen Hoover—Advance Special #10337A	\$300
Red Bird Mission	\$100
The Wesley—Endowment Fund	\$100
Asbury Methodist Village Guild	\$100
N. M. Carroll Home	\$400
Life Water Canada (Wells)	\$200
U.M.C.O.R.	\$300
TOTAL	\$3,400



UMC Lectionary Calendar January, 2016

January 1—New Year's Day/
Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus

Church Color: White
Holy Name of Jesus
Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 8 (UMH 743)
Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 2:15-21

New Year's Day
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8 (UMH 743)
Revelation 21:1-6a
Matthew 25:31-46

Jan. 3 – Epiphany Sunday
Church Color: White
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (UMH 795)
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 6 – Epiphany of the Lord
Church Color: White
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (UMH 795)
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 10 – First Sunday after the Epiphany/Baptism of the Lord

Church Color: White
Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29 (UMH 761)
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Jan. 17 – Second Sunday After the Epiphany
Church Color: Green
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10 (UMH 771)
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

Jan. 24 – Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Church Color: Green
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19 (UMH 750)
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

Jan. 31 – Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany
Church Color: Green
Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 71:1-6 (UMH 794)
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Luke 4:21-30

Note From Rev. John Mayden, former LRUMC Youth Director

John has written a book entitled, *Breaking the Barriers—Keys to Unlocking Inner Peace*

The book is a topical devotional resource that is the first of a three-volume series which aims to provide the reader with spiritual keys to help them overcome common barriers that prevent them from experiencing inner peace. These keys are intended to help the reader unlock the door of inner peace and move forward in life and get unstuck from the ruts of sadness, frustration and inner turmoil. As a result of experiencing peace, the reader is released to become the person that God wants them to be and achieve the purpose that God has for their life.

It is available on Amazon.com.

John will discuss his book at an Enoch Pratt Library Event, Wednesday, February 3, at 6:30 to 7:30PM – Forest Park Branch, Meeting Room 3023 Garrison Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21216.

For more information, see:
http://calendar.prattlibrary.org/event/breaking_the_barriers_keys_to_unlocking_inner_peace_4028#.VmOXwzhdFxA



Love Offering for Bishop Marcus Matthews

“Learn, Lift, Lead.” These words exemplify the ministry of Bishop Marcus Matthews. In September 2016, Bishop Matthews will retire. To celebrate all that he has given to the church, congregations, communities and individuals, all are invited to contribute to a special love gift to Africa University to honor his legacy. Funds will be used toward building a fitness facility that will improve the quality of life for the student body. This sports and health facility is a vital part of the University's master planning. Last year when West Africa experienced the Ebola outbreak, students from the affected countries were able to remain safely on campus. These same students travel thousands of miles to study and rarely leave to visit their home. Having this facility will help to keep them healthy in body, mind and spirit.

At the November charge conference our District Superintendent made an appeal to the church to participate in this honorarium to the Bishop. Each church has been asked to take a love offering. All offerings will be presented to the Bishop at farewell events around the conference in April.

If you would like to make a donation to honor our Bishop, you can do so by placing a check in the offering plate

made out to Loch Raven U. M. C. with a notation “bishop gift.” Thank you for your faithful support.

Carole Webner
Lay Member to
Annual Conference



United Methodist Women January Schedule

“Women in Christ” Circle
Monday, January 4
7:30 p.m.—Room 202
Study: *Jeremiah: Daring to Hope in an Unstable World*
Lesson 2—Recognizing Counterfeits and the Real Deal
Study Leader: Cheryl
Devotions: Cheryl
Hostess: Joann

Phyllis Downes Circle
Tuesday, January 5
10 am—Parlor

NO GENERAL MEETING

Human Relations Day—January 17

Strengthens United Methodist outreach to communities in the United States and Puerto Rico, encouraging social justice and work with at-risk youth.

Turn on the news or drive around the outskirts of your town and you will find what Jesus called “the least of these.” Those living in the margins of society, struggling to survive. People like:

An immigrant teenager in Texas’ poorest county, being recruited by a local gang.

A father struggling for sobriety in Little Rock, Arkansas.

An Oklahoma woman recently released from incarceration looking for work.

Over and over Jesus served people like this, embracing them. And that’s what we want to model as the people of The United Methodist Church. To continue the ministry of Jesus we established Human Relations Day as a Special Sunday that calls all of our churches to participate in helping all God’s children to realize their potential.

For more information, see: www.umcgiving.org/ministry-articles/human-relations-day

Other Special Giving Sundays in 2016:

One Great Hour of Sharing—Sunday, March 6

Native American Ministries—Sunday, April 10

Peace with Justice Sunday—May 22

World Communion Sunday—October 2

United Methodist Student Day—Sunday, November 27

IN TOUCH MINISTRY

Special Prayer Requests

Please refer to insert in Sunday bulletins for up-to-date information.

Stay in Touch with some of our members who are not able to regularly attend church. Contact the church office for up-to-date information.

January Birthdays

- 1 Laurie Collidge
- 2 Gregory Sinkler
- 7 Hannah Yeich
- 14 Scott Eshleman
- 15 Jessica Lautenschlager
- 16 Owen Williams
- 21 Hortense Fauntleroy
Stephen Ferguson
- 22 Jim Wagner
- 25 James Ferguson
- 26 Margaret Tracey
Joseph Caleb
- 27 Nancy Gillotti
- 29 Ev Dorfler
Carolyn Lutz

Membership Updates

Address Changes:

Donald Vohrer
8 Dublin Way
Bel Air, MD 21014

Deceased:

Joseph Barker
November 14, 2015

Removed by Charge Conference:

Janene Crawford



A Sugary Success!

Sugar cookies, sand tarts, black bottoms, ginger cookies, cookies with raisins, nuts, candy and chocolate chips and a scrumptious array of Christmas cookies filled four tables in Fellowship Hall at Loch Raven's first annual Christmas Cookie Fundraiser, and they flew off the tables onto trays, over to the weigh and cashier stations and out the door after the worship service, emptying the cookie plates of 70 pounds of cookies and filling the cash box with \$352 in only 20 minutes. This event was launched by the new Fundraiser Committee, a group dedicated to planning events for adding monies to the LRUMC general fund. Committee members baked their favorite holiday treats and manned the stations, assisted by two of our younger members of the church, Grace and Kaitlin, for this first-time church event providing for a wonderful success.

Throughout the winter months, the Committee will be selling bean soup mix. Forty years ago, the Choir offered sales of bean soup and it was such a success that new choir robes were purchased with the funds. There is nothing better to sooth the soul and warm the spirits on a dreary cold winter day than a delicious bowl of this soup. Soup mix bags are \$5 and available through Committee members or on Sunday mornings.

Upcoming fundraising events may include Super Bowl Sub Sale Day (with or without the Ravens playing), Valentine candy sales, buns on the run, Variety Show/spaghetti dinner night, a birthday celebration lunch, comedy night and a holiday bazaar. New ideas for fundraising events and new Committee members are always welcome to join this fundraising by fun raising group by contacting chairperson Maria Stockton-Porter.