

The Spire



May 2011

Loch Raven United Methodist Church

A Word About Hospitality and a Word of Caution

We seek to be very hospitable to all who come to worship at LRUMC, and visitors often remark on how warmly they have been welcomed. It is also good to exercise appropriate caution and keep track of personal belongings. Last month in a Baltimore County UMC, a worshipper left car keys in a coat and hung it up on the coat rack to attend the service. Someone took the keys out of the coat, took the person's van from the lot and went and burglarized the person's home while the congregation worshipped. Authorities and church staff believe that someone inside and someone outside the church were communicating by cell phone.

Please continue to greet everyone with Christ-like welcome, while also exercising good stewardship of personal items by keeping keys, purses and other valuables in your possession or sight. Please also pray for those who felt that it was okay to violate the spirit of community and worship in that church by making it an opportunity for theft.

SPRC Welcomes New Members

The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is as busy as ever this year. Merrill Harrison's term as chair ended in December and needless to say, she left some big shoes to fill for the incoming chairpersons. Since I am relatively new to LRUMC and United Methodist administration, the committee decided it would be beneficial to share the chairperson position in 2011 before I take on full chair responsibilities in 2012. Judy Feustle will serve as co-chair, and I will be looking to her for guidance and wisdom as I learn the position and attempt to match Merrill's incredible organizational and leadership abilities.

Newcomers Judy Zahren, Lois Hively, Ola Akerele, and Bob Bartram will join Sandra Edmonds, Adrian Palazzi, and Jonathan Wilson as SPRC members. As a reminder, one of the goals of the SPRC is to counsel Pastor Gayle and Pastor Bob on relationships with the congregation, priorities, and goals. In order to adequately fulfill this duty, the SPRC needs to be aware of any concerns or goals members of the congregation would like to have addressed. We would like all members to feel free to share these with me or any other SPRC members. Everything discussed in SPRC meetings remains confidential, and we will work hard to appropriately discuss each topic.

Staff Transitions

Another duty of the SPRC is to fill open church staff positions with qualified personnel. Sadly, we will have more than one opportunity to do that this year. Jen Byrd has been given a promotion which requires her to move to Atlanta, Georgia. While we are very happy that Jen has received this great opportunity, we are painfully aware of how much she will be missed within our church family. Jen has graciously and enthusiastically

(Continued on page 4)

Inside This Issue ...

Cluster Choir Festival	Page 2
Pastor's Message	Page 3
UMW Flea Market	Page 4
Offering Envelopes	Page 5

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 June issue is **Sunday, May 8, 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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Change of Name/Address - Call, mail or e-mail church office.

Website: www.LRUMC.org

Collection for Assistance Center of Towson Churches

May is the month that Loch Raven UMC usually has its annual food drive for ACTC. This year we have been asked to collect monetary donations instead because the Boy Scout food drive collected more food than ACTC has space to store. The center is also short on funds for general operating expenses and for providing emergency funds to clients. If you would like to help you can put a check in the offering plate marked ACTC or use an envelope in the pew. Thanks in advance for helping.

United Methodist Women May Schedule

Prepared by Betty Shock

“Women in Christ” Circle

Monday, May 2
 7:30 p.m.—Room 202
 Study: 3/27/11 *Lectionary Leaf*

Phyllis Downes Circle

Tuesday, May 3
 10 am—Parlor
 Study: 1 John Chapter 3

GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, May 18
 Covered Dish— 6:30 p.m.
 Speaker: Rev. Gayle will talk about her mission to Haiti

Circle Assignments:

Set up—WIC
 Main Dish—S-Z
 Vegetable—A-C
 Salad—D-I
 Dessert—J-R
 Clean up—P. Downes

Fundraiser for The Wesley Home

Trip to Totem Pole Playhouse to see *Hank Williams: Last Highways*

Tuesday, June 7

For information and reservations, contact Dorothy Compton at 410-668-8788



Loch Raven to Host Cluster Choir Festival

The Annual Cluster Choir Festival will be held this year at Loch Raven UMC on **Sunday, May 22nd, at 4:30 p.m.** Our theme for the festival is *A Song for Every Season* and it will feature anthems for special days in the church year including

All Saints Day, Communion Sunday, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Each year the Cluster Choir Festival is a way to glorify God through song and enjoy fellowship with members of other churches in our area. Please invite your friends and neighbors!



Dear
Friends,

Last month as I wrote to you, I was preparing to leave the next day for a mission trip to Haiti. It was an amazing trip. Below is the article I wrote for the Baltimore-Washington Conference paper about our experience. Thanks again for the support of prayer, finances and good wishes. Dick and I are blessed to be in ministry among you.

We arrived in Haiti around noon, the day after Ash Wednesday, almost unable to believe we were finally there. Though Lent had just begun, we had planned to go during Advent, but the unrest after the election results were announced began a couple of days before our travel date, and our flight, along with many others, was cancelled. It seems that politics in Haiti are unpredictable, and with the return of former president Duvalier (Baby Doc) and the anticipated arrival of former president Aristide, along with the upcoming run-off election...well, let's just say we thought it a good idea to have trip cancellation insurance this time.

Our team was organized as a Baltimore Regional team. We had 10 interested persons, but lost 5 along the way to work and family commitments and fear of cholera, so 5 of us finally made the trip. We were assigned to work on a church building project in Les Cayes, a small city in southwest Haiti about 110 miles from Port au Prince. It took more than 4 1/2 hours to get

there. Roads were few in number and crowded before the earthquake, but now include buckled places, unsafe bridges that must be avoided and huge potholes.

Volunteers in Mission to Haiti work on projects identified as priorities by the Methodist Church in Haiti, and in the Les Cayes Circuit of 21 churches (Yes, I did say 21), the Torbeck church is a priority. The building is very small, and Pastor Ablame's wife Donnette, our hostess, describes it as dilapidated. The benches are rickety, the concrete floor is uneven and broken in places. It has seen better days. The new building, already begun by 3 previous VIM teams, is 3 times the size of the current, tiny, facility, and the plan is that it will serve as a hub for the several churches in this part of the larger circuit.

We arrived to find the foundation dug and laid, and the walls constructed about halfway up. Our job that week, working along with local Haitian folks, was to continue the work of putting up the outer walls of this rectangular building. Truth be told, we had absolutely no experience or knowledge of how to work with the simple ladders and crude homemade scaffolding they had, or how to implement the simple but precise building techniques required, but we learned that we were pretty good pack mules.

Supplies, dirt, wood and cement, were dropped by the road and had to be carried down a path to the church. We became quite accomplished at every facet of implementing a bucket brigade; keeping the

buckets from getting too heavy, putting tree branches with leaves on top of buckets of water carried from the nearby river to keep the water from sloshing out, and pacing ourselves in the heat and humidity of the day.

I was asked to preach the Sunday sermon in the Torbeck church, and our able translator, Patrick, made that possible, since I don't speak Creole. The week flew by, and before we knew it, it was time to make the journey back to Port au Prince before heading back to Baltimore. We arrived back in PaP the same day that Aristide arrived in country, but were glad to find that the reaction was peaceful and without incident.

What would we say to you after this experience?

1. We were proud to be connected with UMCOR/UMVIM in the work that is happening in Haiti. Much good is being done in the partnership between the Methodist Church in Haiti and volunteers who come bringing a willingness to do whatever is asked and project funds which enable things to happen.

2. The staff on the ground, both Haitian and consultants/missionaries from the US hold the safety of all as the highest priority. To that end, they maintain practices that provide safe food and water and secure accommodations for all volunteers. Despite the scare and the reality of too many Haitian deaths, the efforts of the Methodist staff have been successful

(Continued on page 5)

SPR Welcomes New Members

(Continued from page 1)

cally taken on many positions over the years and has been the definition of a servant leader within LRUMC. One of the most important of these positions is that of youth director. The SPRC is now working to fill this position, and due to the importance of this ministry and its impact on our church's youth, we would much prefer to fill the position internally. Anyone interested in taking on this vital and rewarding role should contact me or Judy Zahren for a complete job description and submit an application by April 26th.

Unfortunately, we have a second loved staff member leaving LRUMC in June. Song Yi, our gifted organist, will be moving to Kansas for her doctoral program. Kansas has excellent professors with experience in competition as

well as a strong church music program. We thank God that Song Yi has this opportunity to continue to grow her talent and that we have had the opportunity to hear her play incredible organ pieces for so many Sundays. The SPRC will soon begin searching for a new organist, and we are hopeful that Peabody will continue to provide us with outstanding musicians.

SPRC is planning for farewell festivities, and we certainly want to send each of these wonderful women off with a love gift. Watch for the details for celebrations which will be coming soon. To make a contribution to a love gift, please mark your gift "Love gift for Jen" or "Love gift for Song Yi" and put it in the plate, or bring or mail it to the office.

Scott Eshleman
Co-chair SPR

Thanks to Family Ministries for Successful Fish Fry

The fourth annual LRUMC Fish Fry was held on April 1, and was once again a great success. Thanks to the Family Ministries Committee for a wonderful evening of delicious food and warm fellowship. There has been talk of doing this meal as a fundraising dinner and opening it up to the public next year. What do you think? To provide feedback on this idea, speak to Sharon Gardner or any member of the Family Ministries Committee, to Church Council Chair Rhoda Wilson or Pastor Gayle.

Faith doesn't get you around trouble; it gets you through it.

—Anonymous

Habitat for Humanity

On Saturday, April 9, four people from LRUMC joined numerous others from the churches of the United Churches Coalition to work on a house on Jefferson Street near Johns Hopkins Hospital. They worked on windows, insulation and other tasks. Volunteers are needed through June. See Dick Annis-Forder if you are interested.



United Methodist Women

**Annual Flea Market
Saturday, June 4
9 a.m.—1 p.m.**

To reserve a space for \$15 contact:
Nancy Gillotti—410-823-5187 or
Nancy Harvill—410-828-8271

Haiti Report

(Continued from page 3)

in that no volunteers have gotten cholera. We asked.

3. While some folks show some signs of disdain for the "blanc" (Americans, particularly white), most are warm, welcoming and eager to work with all who would come to assist in meeting the needs there.

4. God is at work in Haiti, evidenced in passionate worship, life enhancing ministries, and the will to rebuild. It was a great privilege for us to join with others in this movement of God's Spirit, and we will never be the same.

There is much to be done in Haiti. Teams and resources continue to be needed. We encourage you to be guided by God's call to you to serve, rather than by fear. Please contact me with any questions, or if you desire someone to come and share with your church about the ministry of our church in Haiti. We'll be going back again. Perhaps you'd like to join us in this adventure.

Gayle Annis-Forder
Pastor, Loch Raven UMC

Team Leader, Baltimore Regional Team to Les Cayes, Haiti, March 10-19, 2011
gannis-forder@lrunc.org
410.825.0900

From the Mailbox

I want to thank everyone at Loch Raven Church for their prayers during my recent surgery. I especially want to thank Rev. Fringo for his visits and prayers.

Sincerely,
Ruth Davis

Perhaps you sent a lovely card, or sat quietly in a chair. Perhaps you sent a funeral spray, if so we saw it there. Perhaps you spoke the kindest words, as any friend could say; perhaps you were not there at all, just thought of us that day. Whatever you did to console our hearts, we thank you so much whatever the part.

From the family of Donna
Michele Wilson Johnson

Offering Envelopes

Please be sure you are using your box of 2011 offering envelopes. Your envelope number changes from year to year, and the financial assistants record your contributions using the envelope number. Please help them to record contributions accurately and to the correct person by using this year's envelopes only. The box itself does not have the year on it, but each dated envelope is marked with the year. Thanks!

Membership Updates

February and March 2011

Address Change:

Charles & Jean Angle
615 Chestnut Avenue #206
Towson, MD 21204
(410) 842-0258

Deceased Member:

Donald Gillotti 2/13/2011

Donna Johnson 3/7/2011

New Members:

James Edmonds
1223 Sheridan Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21239

Adiaha Essien
1920 Burnwood Road
Baltimore, MD 21239

Dellroy Harrison
7908 Hillendale Road
Baltimore, MD 21234

Rebecca Mickey
1500 Windemere Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21218

Kevin Priebe
5215 Catalpha Road
Baltimore, MD 21214

Joycelyn Williams
4038 Hillen Road
Baltimore, MD 21218