



Emmanuel United Methodist Church
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The Lamplighter





The Lamplighter: The Newsletter of Emmanuel UMC!

The Lamplighter

FEBRUARY 2026

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Do you have something for our newsletter? Send items to the editor, Rick Bergmann at lamplighter@eumcbeltsville.com



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Rice Dreams: Our American History

I started baking when I was four by imitating my stay-at-home mom. It began with muffins that turned out like cookies because they were rather "crisp." Soon after that, I began cooking breakfast foods—nothing fancy, mostly scrambled eggs and grits. I was so short I couldn't reach the stovetop, so I'd pull over the wooden block I used to sit on and use it as a stool. My mother admonished me not to touch the stove unless she was in the kitchen. My father, however, encouraged me to cook him breakfast on the weekends. Looking back, he got a big kick out of it!

By the time I was seven, my younger sister had begun going to school, so my mother took a part-time job outside the home. Although she was a licensed cosmetologist and barber, she didn't like the idea of people outside the family coming to our house to have their hair done. Since we kids—two older brothers in addition to the aforementioned younger sister—usually got home in the late afternoon, my mother made it my responsibility to start supper by cooking the rice, because it usually took the longest to cook. If you know anything at all about the evening meal in South Carolina, rice was a staple on the menu. Therefore, my mother showed me how to cook rice and gave me permission to use the stove on my own. I cooked rice every weekday, and then my mother began to teach me how to cook other foods. By the time I was nine, I could cook almost anything.

By the time I was twelve, my mother had passed away. Decades later, when my father became ill, my husband, Curtis, and I moved from Maryland to South Carolina. One evening, Curtis remarked, "It seems like we have rice every day," and I simply chuckled. It took him a minute to figure out that in the Lowcountry, rice was a South Carolina standard!

Rice was South Carolina's first major cash crop and was reportedly introduced to the colony by a pirate, John Thurber, who transported rice seeds from Madagascar around 1685. That crop was responsible for transforming the Lowcountry into an economic powerhouse—one built on the brutal labor and agricultural expertise of enslaved West Africans. The Lowcountry was a particularly fertile area for growing rice, which became the prized "Carolina Gold." This rice variety was so much in demand that it drove the prosperity of South Carolina until the Civil War. Rice has been part of my family history and is deeply rooted in our African American history. I cook rice the way my mother taught me, just as her mother taught her, and so on. It wasn't until I met a work colleague from India that I learned to cook rice in a different way from my generations-long tradition.

Even as I recall some of the first breakfasts I made as a child, one favorite Monday morning meal was egg fried rice, made with leftover rice from Sunday dinner. Rice brings back such good memories, along with sober reminders of our shared American history.

Pastor King



ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 18

Join us for Ash Wednesday Worship

Noon Service

Community United Methodist Church
300 Brock Bridge Rd.,
Laurel, MD 20724

Evening Service • 7:00 PM

Queen's Chapel United Methodist Church
7410 Old Muirkirk Rd.,
Beltsville, MD 20705

All are welcome as we begin the Lenten season together.



Update from the Trustees

By Rick Bergmann



EMMANUEL
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BELTSVILLE, MD

TRUSTEES

Parsonage Update

Last month, we shared that we were in the process of renewing the rental license for the parsonage. We are happy to report that the license has been successfully renewed. In the interest of full transparency, we would like to outline the work that was required in order to complete this process.

The following repairs and maintenance were completed:

1. Removal of seven mattresses that had been dumped on the property - \$750
2. Repair of a basement leak, including cutting into drywall to locate the source - \$200
3. Installation of a new sump pump and stop (to prevent water from rushing back) - \$450
4. Installation of a second stop on the other sump pump on the property - \$50
5. Installation of a new electrical outlet and wiring for the replaced sump pump - \$380
6. Repair of a broken drain pipe, including installation of a 2" cleanout, 11 feet of pipe, and repair and painting of drywall - \$2,600
7. Installation of a new dryer vent - \$80.00
8. Replacement of the gas boiler that was no longer functioning - \$10,471
9. Removal of several dead trees on the property before they could fall and cause damage - \$3,200
10. Replacement of the washer and dryer - \$1,166

Total cost: \$19,347

Many of these issues were discovered at the same time because the parsonage has been without a tenant since our last renter moved out in 2023. During that time, the home was maintained primarily by ensuring heating and cooling systems were operating during the appropriate seasons. Notably, the gas boiler failed approximately two months after the current tenant moved in.

Sanctuary and Education Building Update

This winter, we experienced only one major issue in the sanctuary and education buildings. A radiator in a ground-floor classroom stopped working and had to be replaced, at a cost of **\$4,285**.

As we all know, our building is not new. To keep it functioning safely and effectively, repairs will be necessary from time to time.

Snow and Ice Removal

With winter underway, snow and ice removal may be required. We have a contract in place with our grounds maintenance company, and our goal is to clear sidewalks, parking lots, and the driveway as soon as it is safe to do so. This helps ensure the safety of our members, guests, and the faculty and students at the school.

Thank you for all the support

The Trustees sincerely thank you for your continued support. As a reminder, if you notice something that may need repair, please notify the church office or a trustee.



Cooking with Pastor King: Fish Patty Cakes

Ingredients:

- 3 cans tuna, (5 ounce– 15 oz total) drained NOTE: You can substitute canned salmon or mackerel
- 2-3 large eggs
- Zest of 1 medium lemon
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs or panko (GF/keto version with crushed pork rinds, oat flour, or almond flour)
- 3 Tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

- 1 stalk celery , finely chopped
- 3 Tablespoons minced onion
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried herbs (oregano, dill, basil, thyme or any combo)
- 1/4 teaspoon Kosher salt , or to taste
- Black pepper to taste

NOTE: Substitute for Old Bay seasoning if other herbs and spices if you'd like. Tweak it as you like it.

Instructions:

- Use olive oil or oil spray for coating patties
- Mix all ingredients together in a bowl. Form mixture into balls and flatten into patties

Cooking Options:

- (1) Cook in air fryer until golden brown. Spray a little oil spray on the patties before putting them in air fryer to help them brown down
- (2) In frying pan lightly coated with olive oil, brown patties on each side. Finish off in preheated 375 degree oven for 10 minutes.



Sharing Comfort This Winter

Help us spread warmth and care—bring soup and crackers by Super Bowl Sunday, Sunday February 8 for care packages going out to our sick and shut-in later in February. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. They will be collected in a basket in the back of the sanctuary.

February “Souper” Potluck

In celebration and appreciation of all the “souper” people of Emmanuel and your gracious support of our projects, UWFaith invites you to enjoy a bowl of delicious, nourishing soup following Sunday worship on February 8. Soup and chili, salad, cornbread, crackers, and drinks will be provided. If you would like to donate anything, desserts are welcome and appreciated.





2026 Potluck Schedule

Our monthly potlucks are typically held on the second Sunday of each month. Occasionally, other events require us to adjust the date. Below is the 2026 schedule for our monthly potlucks:

- February 8
- March 22
- April 12
- May 10
- June 21
- July 12
- August 9
- September 6
- October 11
- November 8
- December 20



History of Hymns: "We Shall Overcome"

By C. Michael Hawn

We Shall Overcome

African American Spiritual

The United Methodist Hymnal, No. 533

*We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
we shall overcome someday!*

*Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
we shall overcome someday!*

"We Shall Overcome" is a simple musical composition with complex origins. Songs that are transmitted by oral tradition develop a life of their own. They survive because they are portable — they can be sung easily without musical notation. They survive because they are adaptable — they can be modified on the spot to fit circumstances as they arise. They survive because they give voice to a movement — their identity is unified with the aspirations of people. These attributes supersede concerns of origins in many ways.

That said, how do we get this song that is synonymous with the African American Civil Rights Movement (1955-1968)? Some ascribe its origins to a gospel hymn by Methodist preacher Charles Albert Tindley (1851-1953), who ministered in Philadelphia at the turn of the twentieth century and penned 45 songs for his congregation. It is tempting to credit the lyrical origins of "We Shall Overcome" to the refrain of Tindley's "I'll Overcome Some Day":

*I'll overcome some day,
I'll overcome some day;
If in my heart I do not yield
I'll overcome some day.*

However, the Rev. Carlton Young and others have pointed out that, though some words are in common, there is no metrical or melodic similarity between the two songs.

Another theory posed by Australian hymnologist Wesley Milgate is that "We Shall Overcome" is based on a spiritual derived from the tune of "The Sicilian Mariner's Hymn to the Virgin." This tune, SICILIAN MARINERS, may be found in *The United Methodist Hymnal* as hymn 671. As the Rev. Young points out, the first eight measures bear a striking resemblance to the music of "We Shall Overcome." Slaves may have heard the seafaring hymn sung by sailors during the middle passage from Africa via England and on to America and adapted it. William McClain, preaching professor at Wesley Theological Seminary, affirms the roots of the song in slavery, but notes, "it is not known exactly how many or which of the verses of this song originated with the slaves."

The song was published in 1947 in the *People's Song Bulletin* through the efforts of folk song activist Pete Seeger (1919-2014) with an introduction by musician and community activist Zilphia Horton (1910-1956), who, with her husband Miles Horton, were the founders of the Highlander Folk School in 1932, a training school for union organizers in New Market, Tennessee. She has been credited for adapting songs such as "We Shall Overcome," "This Little Light of Mine," and "We Shall Not Be Moved" to the Civil Rights Movement. By the time of its publication in 1947, the Rev. Young states, "the song emerged from the African American oral tradition and became a protest song of both segregated and integrated labor unions."

Guy Carawan (b. 1927), a white folk musician and musicologist trained at the Highlander Folk School, introduced the song, according to Julian Bond, to the Civil Rights Movement by teaching it to the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1960. The song was then picked up by folk singers such as Joan Baez (b. 1941) in the early 1960s and sung at protest rallies, folksong festivals, and concerts where it became identified and adapted for the Civil Rights Movement with new stanzas.

Continued on the next page

History of Hymns continued from previous page

When asked the origins of the song in an interview by Wendy Schuman in 2011, Pete Seeger responded: "Nobody knows exactly who wrote the original. The original was faster." He then sings, "I'll be alright, I'll be alright, I'll be alright, someday ... deep in my heart I do not weep, I'll be alright someday." Seeger notes other variants such as, "I'll wear the crown, I'll wear the crown," and "I'll be like Him, I'll be like Him" or "I'll overcome, I'll overcome." Recent scholarship by Isaias Gamboa in *We Shall Overcome: Sacred Song on the Devil's Tongue* (2012) focuses on the gospel song "If My Jesus Wills" by Louise Shropshire (1913-1993), an African American Baptist choir director, who composed her song in the 1930s, published it in 1942, and copyrighted it in 1954. The lyrics of this close friend of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. bear a stronger resemblance to the song we know:

***I'll Overcome, I'll Overcome, I'll Overcome Someday
If My Jesus Wills, I Do Believe, I'll Overcome Someday***

In a more recent interview with Pete Seeger in 2012, he affirms, "It's very probable" that Louise Shropshire taught "If my Jesus Wills" to Zilphia Horton, the person who taught Seeger the song. Seeger acknowledges that Louise Shropshire "should be added to the story" of "We Shall Overcome." The adaption and adoption of this song has been widespread, including its use in Northern Ireland by Catholics seeking equal rights in 1968, anti-Communist movements during the Cold War, and by college students in the Indian state of Kerala in 1970s protesting Communism.

Recent film appearances include the 2010 Bollywood movie "My Name Is Khan," comparing the struggle of Muslims in the United States with that of African Americans. Even more recently, the song plays a prominent role in Lee Daniel's film "The Butler" (2012). Film producer Simon Sheffield discovered Gamboa's book in tracking down the copyright to the song. Discovering the story of Lousie Shropshire, Sheffield contacted Gamboa, and eventually Shropshire's grandson, Robert Anthony Goins Shropshire. Additional research was commissioned by Sheffield leading to further recognition of Lousie Shropshire's role in the composition of this song. Film director Lee Daniels received the We Shall Overcome Foundation's Oscar Micheaux Freedom Award on September 27, 2013, for his role in acknowledging Shropshire.

Perhaps the most significant citation of this song was that of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in his final speech on March 31, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee: "We shall overcome. We shall overcome. Deep in my heart I do believe we shall overcome. And I believe it because somehow the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

In an interview with Amy Goodman in 2004 for Democracy Now, Pete Seeger says: "Only two years ago, I get a letter from a professor in Pennsylvania, who uncovered an issue of the United Mine Workers Journal of February 1909, and a letter there on the front page says, 'Last year at our strike, we opened every meeting with a prayer, and singing that good old song, 'We Will Overcome.'" So it's probably a late 19th century union version of what was a well-known gospel song. I'll overcome, I'll overcome, I'll overcome some day."

Wherever this song came from, we are grateful for the power of music to unite people in a common just cause and to lead to change.

While the history of "We Shall Overcome" is complex, the legacy of this song is still being lived out. Like the South African Freedom Songs of the antiapartheid protests in South Africa during the same time, "We Shall Overcome" attests to the power of song to focus a movement, unite those suffering oppression, and offer hope.

Addendum

On September 8, 2017, Federal Judge Denise L. Cote from the United States District Court in Manhattan ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, the makers of the film *The Butler* (2013), that the first stanza of "We Shall Overcome" is in the public domain and that earlier attempts to claim copyright are not valid.

UpStage Artists Brings A Classic into the Modern Age!

By Rick Bergmann



Emmanuel's Community Partner, UpStage Artists, is hard at work on their first production of 2026: a modern update of Oscar Wilde's classic *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Wilde's sharp-witted comedy will come alive in this contemporary production, bringing timeless humor into the present. The play follows the charming but mischievous Jack Worthing, who has invented a fictitious brother, "Ernest," as a convenient excuse to escape his social obligations and enjoy city life. Complications arise when he falls for the spirited Gwendolen Fairfax, who insists she could only love a man named Ernest. Meanwhile, Jack's friend Algernon faces his own

romantic entanglements and the chaos of mistaken identities. Wilde's signature satire skewers social conventions, romantic ideals, and the absurdities of etiquette, all while delivering laughter that resonates across centuries. This contemporary setting gives new life to Wilde's sparkling dialogue, proving that the pursuit of love—and the occasional deception—is always hilariously relevant.

The Importance of Being Earnest is being directed by Anna Fitzmaurice, who previously directed two of UpStage's biggest and best-loved productions: *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* in 2023 and *Much Ado About Nothing* in 2024. Fitzmaurice has assembled a wonderful cast of returning veterans and talented newcomers. The cast includes:

Dylan Hernandez as Jack Worthing
Trenor Gould as Algernon Moncrieff
Becky Goldberg as Gwendolen Fairfax
Beatrice Ieronimo as Cecily Cardew
Jeanne Louise as Lady Bracknell
Nancy Somers as Miss Prism
Peter Rouleau as Rev. Chasuble
Peter Schultz as Lane/Merriman

This promises to be an evening of hilarious theater that UpStage Artists is very excited to bring to the community. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased online or at the door. A note of caution: performances may sell out, so advance purchase is recommended.

Show dates are:

March 6, 7, 13, and 14 at 7:30 p.m.

March 8 and 15 at 2:00 p.m.

All performances are held at right here at Emmanuel. Come out and see a show!



Join Us For Virtual Bible Study

Virtual Bible Study is back. We meet on Tuesdays at 7 pm on Zoom. Each lesson is self contained so you can drop in whenever you are available. Join us for a good discussion of the Bible and how it relates to our lives each week.

ZOOM INFO: <https://bit.ly/4dO5iry>

Meeting ID: 929 3284 2856

Passcode: bible

If you are calling in: 1-301-715- 8592

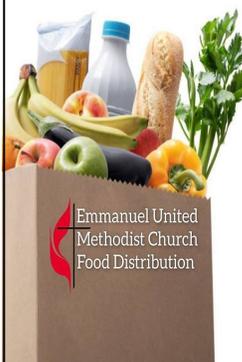
Meeting ID: 929 3284 2856

Passcode: 77881

Worship Through Giving: How Can I Give?

Online: www.eumcbeltsville.com/giving or scan the QR Code below. This is a great way to keep up with your giving if you are out of town, are sick or if you can't come to church.

Through the Mail: mail your offering to 11416 Cedar Lane, Beltsville, MD 20705.



FREE MONTHLY FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Saturday February 28
8 am to 11 am

Emmanuel is on Instagram!

Follow @eumc_beltsville



Join us on Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EUMCBeltsville>

February

- 02. Sarah Rodeffer
- 03. Pat Mellott
- 09. Georgia Reitzel
- 16. Glenn Colburn
- 17. Sheun Bello
- 20. Patrick Elliott
- 21. Tobi Oluwafemi
- 22. Karen Mackey
- 24. Nancy Zerbe
- 26. Gary Heath, Rebecca Kirby (Heath)



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Christian Love and Sympathy

The Kassambara Family
The Miller Family
the family of Linda Yancey (Greg Stiggers mother)

Please pray for our homebound

Glen Colburn
Ernie Kilbourne
Emmy Lear



February

- 17. Patrick and Sarah Elliott





February 2026 Calendar

Office Hours

Mondays & Wednesdays | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

By Appointment — Please email the church office at office@eumcbeltsville.com to schedule an appointment

Ongoing Meetings & Activities

Sundays | 10:00 AM — Worship Service (Sanctuary)

Sundays | 6:00 PM — Scouts Meeting (Chester Stewart Room)

Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays | 7:00 PM — UpStage Artists Rehearsals (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesdays | 7:00 PM — Virtual Bible Study (see page 9 for details)

Saturdays | 5:00 PM — Narcotics Anonymous Meeting (Chester Stewart Room)

Special February Events

Sunday February 8 | 10:00 AM — Scout Sunday In The Sanctuary

Sunday February 8 | 11:15 AM — “Souper Bowl” Soup Luncheon and Potluck In The Fellowship Hall

Saturday February 14 | All Day — Valentine’s Day

Wednesday February 18 | 12:00 PM — Ash Wednesday Service at Community United Methodist Church 300 Brock Ridge Road, Laurel, MD 20723

Wednesday February 18 | 7:00 PM — Ash Wednesday Service at Queen’s Chapel Methodist Church 7410 Old Muirkirk Road, Beltsville, MD 20705

Saturday February 28 | 8:00 AM — Monthly Food Distribution in the Education Building

1 Peter 4:8 — “Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”



**BELTSVILLE
COMMUNITY
CATS**

WE HOPE YOU'RE

FELINE THE LOVE

AN EARLY VALENTINE'S DAY FUNDRAISER AT

FRANKLINS

Restaurant • Brewery • General Store

FEBRUARY **10** ALL DAY

5123 Baltimore Ave,
Hyattsville, MD 20781

Join us for a meal, a
scoop of ice cream,
or a bit of shopping,
and a portion of your
total will be donated
directly to
Beltville Community
Cats!

INCLUDES TAKEOUT
&
PURCHASES MADE AT FRANKLINS
ICE CREAM AND GENERAL STORE!



A Modern Adaptation of

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST



**MARCH
6, 7, 13, 13 & 14
AT 7:30 PM**

**MARCH 8 & 15
AT 2:00 PM**

\$15.00

WHERE: Emmanuel United Methodist Church
11416 Cedar Lane, Beltsville, MD 20705

Buy tickets at www.upstageartists.com or at the door
No refunds or exchanges



**EMMANUEL
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**
BELTSVILLE, MD
Engaging the community