

The Lamplighter

Emmanuel United Methodist Church

January 2012



Pastor Daniel Mejia

From a strictly personal perspective, there is one area that I would want to improve in 2012: Learning to be more grateful. I have to confess that it is a lot easier for me to complain than being thankful. In my conversations about gratitude with my spiritual mentor, he keeps asking me, "Have you done your daily five minutes of thankfulness prayer?" What he means by that is, have I taken five minutes to thank God for all of my blessings – the individuals God has used to bless my life, the circumstances of the world which have blessed me, and the abundance of things, including material things, which have come into my life to make it better. Should I run out of specific things for which I can thank God, then spend the rest of the five minutes just slowly saying, "**Thank you, Lord, Thank you, Jesus.**" At first it seemed to me like a simple, almost silly exercise but once I tried it, its benefits were tangible.

Charles H. Spurgeon who was the most famous Baptist preacher of the 1800s in England was also a prolific writer. His sermon collections are an

essential part of any serious preacher. Spurgeon also wrote many devotional books. Here is short reflection from one of his devotional meditations that addresses our need to be more "thankful."

The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.

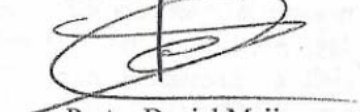
Psalm 126:3

"Some Christians are sadly prone to look on the dark side of everything and to dwell more on what they have gone through than on what God has done for them. Ask for their impression of the Christian life, and they will describe their continual conflicts, their deep afflictions, their sad adversities, and the sinfulness of their hearts with scarcely any allusion to the mercy and help which God has given them. But a Christian whose soul is in a healthy state will come forward joyously and say, "I will speak, not about myself, but to the honor of my God. He brought me up out of a horrible pit and out of the miry clay. He set my feet on a rock and established my goings. He put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God. The Lord has done great things for me, whereof I am glad."

It is true that we endure trials and tribulations, disappointments and frustrations but it is just as true that we are by God's grace delivered out of them. In looking back to 2011, it would be wrong for us to deny that we had trials, but it would be equally wrong to forget that we have been through them safely. The

deeper our troubles and needs, the louder our gratitude to God who has led us through all and preserved us until now. Start every day with five minutes of thankfulness prayer this 2012. I can assure you, the world will look different,

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Daniel Mejia





Assistant Pastor Ben Sloan

After considering Baptism and Confirmation last month, this month I wanted to take a look at the other sacrament in the United Methodist tradition. At the last supper, Jesus instructed the disciples to continue sharing in the bread and the cup together in remembrance of him (Matthew 26:26-28). Today we continue that tradition, and even though we may see the pastor blessing the communion bread and cup and the congregation accepting the bread and cup, God is the primary actor in communion. By continuing to practice the sharing of the bread and the cup, we participate in a ritual in which God has promised to meet us. As St. Augustine aptly defined it, a sacrament is a “sign-act” or an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace. Through taking communion, we encounter the presence of God, we are imparted with God’s grace, and we are transformed as a community into the people of God.

Some people may wonder why if God is the one acting and if nothing can separate us from the love of God, do the details of the act of

communion matter. While I would agree that God’s grace is greater than any mistakes we may make in practicing communion, there is something to be said for faithfully seeking to obey Jesus’ instructions, and with enough errors, the symbolism of the sign-act ceases to function. For example, the preferred way to receive the bread in communion is hold out your hands palms up in front of you while the person serving the bread, places it into your hand. This symbolizes that God’s grace is a gift to us, not something we take from God. Even though taking the bread from a communion server by no means invalidates communion, it does slightly lessen the symbolic impact, and in combination with other errors in practice can threaten communion’s ability to serve as a sign-act. To help preserve the meaning of communion, the United Methodist Church requires that ordained elders bless the communion elements. As theologically educated individuals, ordained elders help protect the meaning behind communion. Elders are not required because they are “more holy,” and the effectiveness of communion is not dependent on the sinlessness of the elder. We are all sinners redeemed by the grace of God, so all are welcome to come to God’s table at communion.

In Palestine in Jesus’ time, sometimes drinkable water was difficult to come by. The alcohol in wine killed parasites, and made water drinkable. Jesus blessed wine at the last supper, but many of you may have noticed that as Methodists we use grape-juice rather than wine in Communion. This comes out of a concern for those around us who may be struggling to stay sober. By using grape juice we both follow in

the tradition of using a drink made from grapes, and we follow the spirit of using a drink that is safe for everyone to drink. In our church we take communion in a way that is called *intinction*. Intinction means that once we have been given the bread, we dip it into a shared cup. This is a way to continue to share from the same, communal cup while, in the absence of alcohol, preventing the spread of germs.

Communion was instituted to be a sacrament that is repeated. John Wesley took communion daily. Historic factors like a shortage of pastors in the United States’ early years have created a cultural situation in which many churches only practice communion once a month or once a quarter. At Emmanuel we practice both weekly communion at the early service and monthly at the later service. This both acknowledges the need for frequent communion, and provides for those of us who have found its meaning enhanced by taking it less frequently.

As participants in a sign-act that is intended to be inclusive of the whole faith community, we have a responsibility to make sure that some are not restricted from taking communion on the basis of physical impairment. We have a responsibility to make sure that communion is shared with our shut-ins and sick. One way to fulfill this duty is to have lay members bring the bread and juice blessed the prior Sunday to these individuals and share in communion with them. One of the many blessings of my summer was being able to bring communion to shut-ins. Anyone can do this as long as the pastor has already blessed the bread and juice.



Thank you to all the elves (you know who you are) who helped with Breakfast with Santa. It was a big success and everyone had a good time. Thank you Santa for making an early stop at Emmanuel.

Also, thank you to everyone who has helped with Family Life activities throughout the year(s): Pre-Shrove Pancake Supper, Seder Tasting, Camping Sunday, the Valentine Dinner, College Angels, Beltsville Day, Hymn Sing at Emory Grove, National Night Out, Trunk or Treat, Breakfast with Santa, various dinners and the Living Nativity that we had for many years. Your Family Life Coordinators appreciate the help and support.

Kathy & Pat Mellott

Making Sure Church Doors are Locked

People are finding doors ajar around the church. Locking is just the first step as the doors are heavy and do not close easily. Please check doors for security.

If you have a group meeting and people leave by several ways, please check all the doors that they have left by.

Thank you,
The Trustees



A Huge Thank You

A huge "thank you" to Bob and Lynne Miller for their continued willingness, faithfulness, time and dedication in decorating our Sanctuary for the Christmas Season. Their hard work is greatly appreciated.

Happy New Year 2012

Unlocking the Church Door



Beth Adle

When you come to the church during the week and the glass doors are locked, why does the person in the office ask you to pull on the left door to enter?

The left door is unlocked at all times, but is held shut by a magnet. When you buzz the office, the person there pushes a button that releases the magnetic pull, allowing you to enter.

The Trustees

During office hours, Administrative Assistant Jo Anne Harrison or Administrative Assistant Beth Adle will unlock the left door remotely from the office when you buzz for entry, with the advice, "Pull the left hand door hard."



Jo Anne Harrison

Christian Education

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” - Romans 12:2

With the advent of the new year, we often think of how we might improve our lives, what we might do differently or new to help us achieve our vision for ourselves. One obvious way we do this is with resolutions. Whether you make a formal resolution or not, what are the things that matter in your life? What are the things you think should matter?

Our Sunday Study program now provides 2 classes for children, 2 classes for teenagers, and 3 classes for adults. These classes represent an opportunity for every individual and family attending Emmanuel UMC—as well as those beyond—to renew their minds in faith. As you know, God’s message is relevant for us all. Each Sunday we gather to learn more about his message together. We have designed our Sunday Study to offer something to everyone in the Emmanuel UMC community, and I hope you will take the opportunity of the new year to join in the fellowship and learning. Our adult classes are:

- The Book of Romans
- Infusions Bible Topical Studies
- Bilingual English-Spanish Study

Try one of these classes in the new year! And invite a friend!



Reminders

The Mitten Tree Donation project runs through January 8. Donate new mittens, gloves, scarves, and hats for children by leaving them on the table in the Durst Walkway, between the main building and the Education Building. Donations will benefit the three Beltsville-area elementary schools.

The Youth Learning Fellowship will begin again on Tuesday, January 17. This opportunity is for all young people age 4 to 18, and it runs every Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. The first hour is the Homework Club, wherein students can do their homework, get help with it, or use Emmanuel’s media lab to use learning websites. The second hour is the Open Doors Fellowship, which consists of spiritual/biblical learning. The Tuesday fellowship is open to everyone, whether an Emmanuel member or a community member.

We are looking for volunteers to assist our primary nursery worker Joan McCarthy at least one

hour a month. We also seek someone to teach the high school Sunday class. Please contact me at toddreitzel@verizon.net if you are interested.

Todd Reitzel
Superintendent

United Methodist Women

The first meeting of the UMW of the New Year will be held Saturday, January 28, 2012 in the Fellowship Hall at 12 noon.

This will be our Prayer and Self Denial meeting. The soup and bread for our lunch will be provided by the executive committee. Doris will be the leader.

All ladies of Emmanuel church are invited.



**United
Methodist
Women**

Emmanuel Produces Another Hit with, “The Year Without A Santa Claus”

It was *The Year Without A Santa Claus* at Emmanuel and unlike the title song which states, “It was the worst we ever had,” it was far from it. The play was a huge success with wonderful audiences for all three shows.

Each show was wonderful and unique and offered several surprises. The beauty of live theater is that things often don't go as planned. On opening night, the screen that was used to project scenes behind the actors fell down exposing the tech crew and actors waiting to go on. The audience was great; they didn't even acknowledge the technical snafu and the actors kept on going without breaking character or scene. It was a wonderful run filled with wonderful memories.

The cast worked extremely hard and was a unique collection of talent who brought with them individual quirks and characteristics to their parts. Each performance was unforgettable. We also had a wonderful crew who helped us with our sound, lights, backdrops and music.



Thank you to the entire cast and crew: John Stewart, Bobbie Deegan, DeeDee Musachio, Patrick McGroarty, Alice White, Merton Baird, Marcus Baird, Charlie Deegan, Scarlet Robertson, Greg Stiggers, Mike Hatton and Erica Belshay.

Also thank you to our wonderful audiences who came and laughed at us and with us.

2012**Emmanuel United Methodist Church Officers and Committees**Please note: **CC** indicates a member on the Church Council

Lay Leader CC	Jane Grays
Chair of Church Council CC	Ann Rowland
Co-Chairperson CC	Patrick Elliott
Recording Secretary CC	Bobbie Deegan
Lay Member of the Annual Conference CC	Mike Hatton
Alternate Lay Member of the Annual Conference CC	Andy Onukwubiri
Membership Secretary CC	Dottie Gilbert
Church Historian CC	Margie Mock
2nd Sunday Lunch CC	Emmy Lear
Angel Tree CC	Becky Cavallo/Jane Grays
Asbury Guild Representative CC	Dottie Gilbert
Children's Ministries CC	Scarlet Robertson
Community Meals Committee CC	Ann Rowland
Coordinator of Communications	Rick Bergmann
Deaf Fellowship CC	Roy White
EMERGE CC	
ESOL CC	Pat Allen
Family Ministries CC	Kathy and Pat Mellott
Food Closet CC	Carol Clatterbuck
Health and Welfare Ministry CC	
Homeless Ministry CC	Julie Pavelka, Theresa Timity
Music Ministries	Staff: Kathryn Griffin
Prayer Ministries CC	Ernie Kilbourne/Ann Anderson
Scout Advisor CC	Julie Pavelka
Superintendent of Sunday School CC	Todd Reitzel
United Methodist Men CC	Rick Bergmann
United Methodist Women CC	Becky Cavallo
Visitation Ministries CC	Doris Wray
Worship Ministries CC	Pat Allen
Youth and Young Adult Ministry CC	Byron Bobo
Van Maintenance	John Kaufmann

Staff-Parish Relations Committee

Chair **CC** Jim Butcher
 Helen Akers, Roy White, Jamie Hiner, Andrew Onukwubiri,
 Nancy Thrush, Bryant Davis

Trustees of the Church

Chairperson **CC** Barbara Butcher
 John Stewart, Olivia Heath, Rick Zerbe, Cale Fuller, John Kaufann,
 Jimmy Bello, Abraham Scotland

Finance Committee

- Chairperson CC..... Charlie Deegan
- Financial Secretary CC..... Lorna Marsales
- Treasurer CC..... Beverly Ward
- Chairperson of Church Council..... Ann Rowland
- Lay Leader..... Jane Grays
- Lay Member to Annual Conference Mike Hatton
- Trustee Representative Barbara Butcher
- Staff-Parish Chairperson Jim Butcher
- Katie Kaufmann, Alice Mabry, Mary Planthold, Kemi Oluwafemi, Mary Ann Vaughan

Memorial Committee

Lois Rodriguez, Margie Mock, Evelyn Adkins
Lay Leader, Trustee, Church Council Chair

Web Site Manager Rick Bergmann

Coffee Hour Manager Leslie Welton

Committee on Lay Leadership

2012 Mamie Smith, Terry Holman, Karl Norris
2013 Bryant Davis, Linda Hiner, Loretta Claye
2014 Lois Rodriguez, Margie Mock

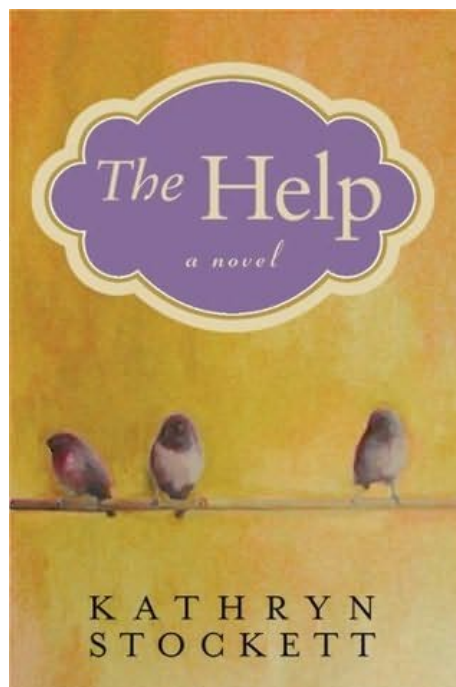
Faithful Readers Book Group

Our next group meeting in the education building will be on Saturday, January 21st, 2012, 10:00-11:00 a m. discussing the book, *“The Help,”* by Kathryn Stockett, with excerpts from the movie, if possible.

You still have plenty of time to read it from the library and bring a friend!

Remember, our snacks are reflecting each book we read! Chicken and biscuits? Quite possibly!

Questions? Contact Bryant Davis or Carol Clatterbuck.





January Birthdays

- 1 Carrie White
- 7 Katherine Cavallo,
- 8 Michael Baker
- 9 Walt Schlegel
- 11 Jane Grays
- 12 Dare Hassan, Sabrina Painter
- 13 Geoffrey Kaufmann
- 14 Hazel Newell
- 19 Kimberly Beach
- 22 Kyrston West
- 23 Dorothy Manley
- 25 Bonnie Bland, Todd Reitzel
- 26 Bobbie Deegan
- 28 Rebecca Vaughan
- 30 Darlene Norris
- 31 Rick Bergmann



January Anniversaries

- 14 Nancy & Rick Zerbe
- 31 Maxine & Karl Norris

THE 2012 ALTAR FLOWER CHART is posted in the Narthex. Please sign up for Altar Flowers; fill out a Flower Request Form and place in the office mailbox.



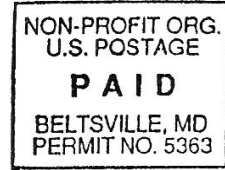
A look back to Sunday morning,
December 20, 2009.



JANUARY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School	2	3	4 7 p.m. Church Council Meeting	5	6	7 12 noon UMW General Meeting
8 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School Second Sunday Lunch 12:30 p.m. Youth Council	9 7 p.m. Depression/ Bipolar Support Group 7:30 p.m. Trustees Meeting	10 10 a.m. Prayer Fellowship 3-7 p.m. Lions Blood Drive 7 p.m. ESOL Registration	11 6 p.m. Maranatha Choir 7 p.m. Worship Committee	12 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	13	14 8:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast
15 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School	16 12 noon Ellen Hoover Circle	17 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship	18 10 am Susanna Wesley Circle 12 noon Dorcas Circle 6 p.m. Maranatha Choir 7 p.m., Sisters in Spirit	19 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	20 11 a.m. Community Place Café	21 10 a.m. Faithful Readers Book Club
22 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School	23 7 p.m. Depression/ Bipolar Support Group	24 10 a.m. Prayer Fellowship 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship	25 6 p.m. Maranatha Choir	26 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	27	28 10 a.m. Food Distribution
29 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School	30	31 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship				

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In This Issue

Pastor's Message

Ben Sloan's Commentary

Thanks to Volunteers

Unlocking the Church Door & Making Sure Church Doors Are Locked

Huge Thank You

Christian Education

United Methodist Women

Emmanuel Produces Another Hit With, "The Year Without A Santa Claus"

Emmanuel United Methodist Church Officers and Committees

Faithful Readers Book Group

January Birthdays, Anniversaries & Altar Flowers

January Calendar

