

# The Lamplighter

Emmanuel United Methodist Church

December 2013



*Pastor Daniel Mejia*

Let me introduce you to Emmanuel's very own "New Kids on the Block."



From left to right you have Lizzie & Maggie Elliott, Jack & Geoffrey Kaufmann, Preston Elliott & Ian Kresge. Missing from this picture are the brothers Kevin & Jason Kresge, and C.J. and Easton Fuller. They are some of our new group of under 6 year olds who participate regularly in the life of our church. You may recognize their faces and their parents because you saw them being baptized or running around in the Narthex. You may recognize them because they are so cute and because of the enthusiasm they bring when they are part of the worship service. Get acquainted with them, and hopefully with many more like them, because

we want them to be an important part of our worship service and life of the church.

In recent months our church has had a healthy dose of conversations about the place and role of little children in the worship service, especially when a little one gets fussy and potentially distracting to the adults around them during worship. We discussed ways in which children can participate and be fed spiritually during the worship service. This raised many good questions by caring church members. For example, how can we help parents ease their anxiety when their children are "being children" during worship? Are there ways that we can make the worship service more welcoming for families with little children? Can adult church members and young church members co-exist during worship?

In light of these and other questions, members of the worship committee and I decided to do serious research and find out what other churches are doing.

The responses, as you can imagine, were very diverse. We found that there is no "one size fits all" solution to helping families with little children feel welcomed at church. However, we were encouraged to see that there are many churches doing great things to help children participate in worship.

## Here are some of our findings:

- Many churches like ours try new things and experiment in hopes to make their worship services more open and accessible to all people.
- Many churches indeed value and encourage the active participation of little children and youth in the worship service.
- Many churches give parents the option of taking their children to a safe, well staffed, functional nursery or keeping their children with them during worship and not feeling judged or scrutinized by the congregation.
- Adult church members with a growing and thriving children's ministry are willing to sacrifice some of their personal comfort during worship in order to have the little children and parents be part of worship.

On the next page, I would like to share some practical guidelines approved by the worship committee that will help all of us begin our congregational and pastoral journey to make our congregation more inviting and loving for families with little children. Before you read these guidelines, bear in mind that this is a work in progress and that in order to be more welcoming to families with children during worship, we need to be open and try new things.

**PASTOR**

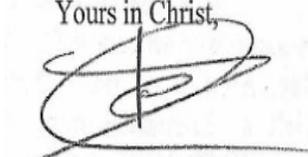
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**PASTOR**

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And one last thing. You might be wondering, **“Why are they asking me to be patient with the little kids during worship and make these changes?”** Well, I’m glad you asked. I’m going to let Jesus answer that question for me.

*Then little children were being brought to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.” And he laid his hands on them and went on his way.”* (Matthew 19: 13-15)

Yours in Christ,  
  
 Pastor Daniel Mejia

**God’s Kids In Worship**

A Guide For Parents and the  
 Congregation

When Children Are In Worship

**To the Congregation:**

During the Sacrament of Baptism the congregation says YES to each child. This YES is an affirmation that they belong, that they are welcome, and that we are glad they are part of our community. This is very true for us here at Emmanuel United Methodist Church. Any way we can help children feel at home is important. Here are a few ways we can do this:

During the Passing of the Peace, greet children, as well as their parent(s).

Hand the offering plate to children, not over their heads.

Invite a child with whom you are acquainted to sit with you during the reading of the liturgy on occasion—after checking it out with his/her parent(s) beforehand.

Ensure that children have a bulletin of their own.

When children are visible in leadership or leading the worship service, respond to them as worship leaders, not as performers.

When there is A Conversation with the Children, laugh with the children, and not at them.

Have patience with their learning process; we are all children to God.

**To the Parents:**

Introduce your children to people sitting alongside you.

Feel free to sit in the first few rows of the sanctuary. Children who can see will feel more a part of what is happening. With this said, we are aware that some parents are more comfortable sitting in the back of the sanctuary closer to the doors. Basically, wherever you are most comfortable is the right place.

Introduce your children to people sitting alongside you.

If possible, seat children with parent(s) between them.

Go over the printed liturgy during the service to identify what will be taking place: hymns, other readings, and Scripture.

Share the hymnal and bulletin with your child/children at their eye level.

Underline the words with your finger for young readers and even the child who cannot yet read will pick out and notice repetitive words.

Children learn worship etiquette by participation. Feel free to whisper to children to teach them how to participate in the worship service.

Encourage your kids to participate in the worship service by teaching them the responses and prayers and allowing them to give an offering during that time of the service.

Before worship--maybe on the way to church--talk about what people or events need our prayers.

Talk about worship at home during the week: “Do you remember the story the pastor told?” . . . “Do you remember the lesson during the Children’s message?” . . . “We could pray part of the prayer we used in worship.”

Remember that it is hard for children to sit still for long. Allow children to sit or kneel on the floor.

Maybe have some ground rules ahead of time: e.g., no paper airplanes, no loud singing during the sermon, limit removal of clothing to shoes and socks!

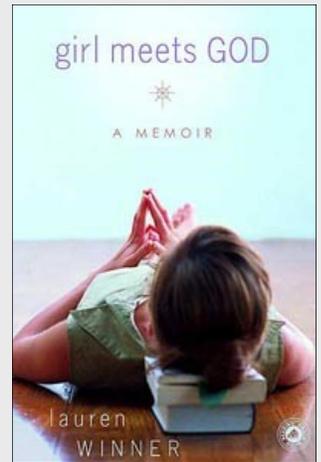
Worship, in many ways, is like a family meal where it is fun to share a meal and simply be together. This is why it is important that all ages of the family are included. Adults who grew up feeling welcomed and a part of a worshipping community are more apt to continue to be actively involved in a community of faith throughout their entire lives. We pray this will be true for your kids.

## Faithful Readers Book Group

On Saturday, January 18th, 2014 the book "Girl Meets God" by Lauren F. Winner will be discussed.

In *Girl Meets God*, this appealingly honest young woman takes us through a year in her search for a religious identity. Despite her conversion, she finds that her world is still shaped by her Jewish experiences. Even as she rejoices in the holy days of the Christian calendar, she mourns the Jewish rituals she still holds dear. Attempting to reconcile the two sides of her religious self, Winner applies the lessons of Judaism to the teachings of the New Testament, hosts a Christian Seder, and struggles to fit her Orthodox friends into her new religious life.

We have great questions ready and this book seems particularly popular online with book groups. Looks like the group picked a good read at our last meeting to start the new year! Questions? Contact Bryant Davis or Carol Clatterbuck.



## Collecting Baby Items for Community Outreach Ministry

*"I bring you good news of Great Joy. It is for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord."* NIV Luke 1:10-11

Soon we will rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ, who entered the world as a helpless and dependent baby to redeem us all. As we anticipate this celebration, I invite you to pause a moment and consider other children who also enter the world in need of protection and help.

Just as our Savior entered the world in a stable; was wrapped in swaddling clothes and given a manger for a bed; many families today struggle to provide the most basic of necessities for their children. These needs range from diapers and formula to clothing and hygiene items. Many families served through the Community Outreach Ministries at Emmanuel face this challenge. Through the grace of God and in his love, we as a congregation seek to address these needs.

As we celebrate Jesus Christ's humble entry into the world to meager surroundings, let us also remember that we too entered the world as helpless infants in need of the love and protection of others. Let us join together to provide assistance, as the family of Christ, to help infants in our community! We invite you in this holy season to give a small gift to help these precious little ones. A basket will be in the Narthex to collect items (please NO gift wrapping) throughout the month of December. Even the humblest of gifts, such as the manger our Savior rested in, is valuable in the life of the child who receives it.

The gifts received will be officially presented as an offering during the Family Service on Christmas Eve, to then be distributed by the Community Outreach Ministry. Each child is a treasure from God, a precious gift, that we are blessed to be called to care for, may our gifts bring comfort to those in need as the gift of a manger brought comfort to Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for contributions (gently used items are welcome):

Diapers (New Born to size 6). Wipes, Diaper Cream, Bottles, Formula, Teething toys, Receiving blankets, Towels, Washcloths, Baby wash, Baby nail clippers, Sleepers, Jackets, Sweaters, Pants, Onesies (short & long sleeve), other clothing.

May God's grace and peace be with you,

*Sarah Elliott*



## United Methodist Women Christmas Party & Cookie Swap

The United Methodist Women will hold a Christmas party and pledge meeting on Saturday, December 7, starting at noon. It will be a potluck. We are having a cookie swap as well. If you would like to participate in the swap, please bring three dozen homemade cookies with the cookies in bags of three. Please join us for the festivities and fellowship!

If you have questions, please contact Becky Cavallo at 301-937-1035



## United Methodist Women Selling Fresh Pecans

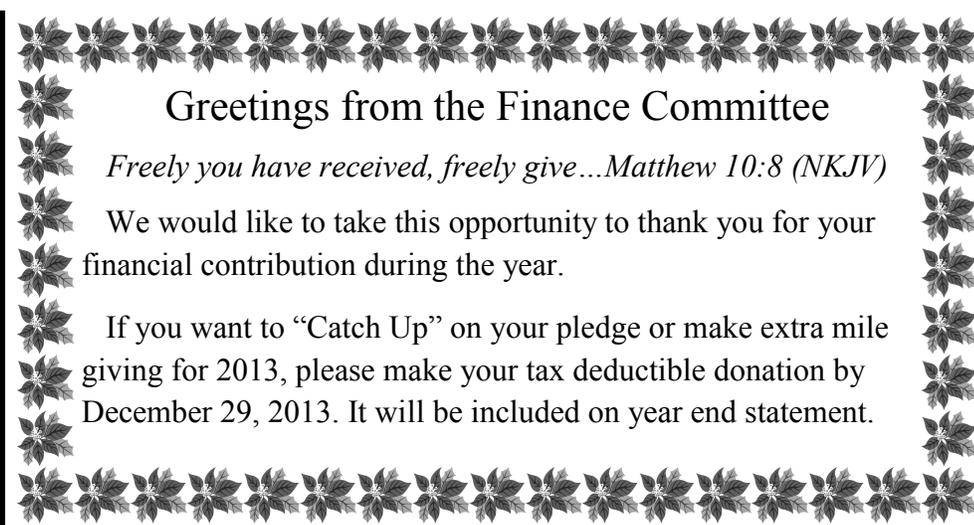
The United Methodist Women are selling fresh Georgia pecans again this year for their holiday fundraiser.

We have halves, pieces, chocolate and glazed pecans at \$10 a bag available for purchase after each church service.



Please stop by our table to purchase these yummy treats. They make great holiday gifts.

For more information, contact Karen Mackey at 301-937-3324.



## Greetings from the Finance Committee

*Freely you have received, freely give...Matthew 10:8 (NKJV)*

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your financial contribution during the year.

If you want to "Catch Up" on your pledge or make extra mile giving for 2013, please make your tax deductible donation by December 29, 2013. It will be included on year end statement.

## Breakfast with Santa

The United Methodist Men will host Breakfast with Santa on Dec. 7 at 9 am!

Tickets are just \$7 each. Children under 3 are free. You can have your picture taken with Santa for just \$5. Breakfast will include sausage and pancakes, juice, milk and coffee. You can buy tickets in the Narthex or register online at <http://eumcbeltsville.com/SantaBfast>.



If you have any questions, email Rick Bergmann at [rick.bergmann@emmanuelumcbeltsville.net](mailto:rick.bergmann@emmanuelumcbeltsville.net)

## Angel Tree Project

The Angel Tree will be in the Narthex thru December 1st. The names on the angels are those of children of an incarcerated parent participating in prison ministries.

To “adopt” an angel, you may pick a paper angel from the tree and purchase a gift for the angel. Information is on the back of the paper angel. We ask that the gift have a value of from \$20 to \$25.

Gifts are due back on December 8, wrapped with the paper angel attached. Each child has two paper angels, one for a clothing item, another for a fun item. Contact Becky Cavallo, 301-937-1035 with any questions.



*The Angel Tree will be in the Narthex thru Dec. 1st*

## Secret Sister Tips

As we approach the holidays, you may want to send your Secret Sister a card or a gift. In order for her to receive it in a timely manner, please send the card directly to her. Do not use your home address, use the church's.

You can put your gift in the basket atop the church mailboxes. If it is too large for that, please contact Jane Grays at 301-937-6392 or [LadyJaneGra@aol.com](mailto:LadyJaneGra@aol.com) for delivery instructions. If you want to send an acknowledgement of a card or gift, Jane will let you know the best way to say “Thank You” while remaining anonymous.



## Bethlehem Idol 2013

Get ready to fall out of your pew laughing as Bethlehem Idol returns to Emmanuel this Holiday Season!!!! Our judges are back with all new acts as we are still searching for the best talent in all of Bethlehem! The evening will start off with a chicken dinner hosted by the youth. Dinner will include baked chicken breast, roasted potatoes, green beans and desert. The show will follow dinner. Tickets are just \$10 and can be bought in the Narthex on Sunday morning or you can also register online at <http://eumcbeltsville.com/BIdol>. Proceeds will go to help the youth as well as the drama ministry. This is a great inexpensive evening for the entire family, we hope you can join us!

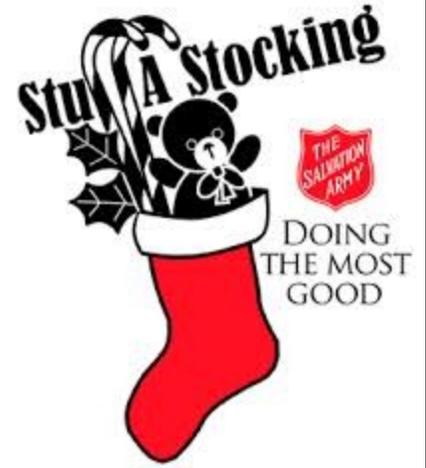


## Salvation Army Christmas Stockings

The Salvation Army Christmas stockings will contain gifts to benefit boys and girls, ages 4-12, living in Prince George's County.

Emmanuel UMC will participate again this year in the gift program. Please pick up your stockings from the Narthex and return by Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup>. Please be sure all items are new and not on the Toy recall list! Stockings should have at least \$5-10 worth of toys or items included. If toys in the stocking are specifically for a boy or girl, please mark the topper boy or girl. Stockings may be generic; if so, you do not need to mark the topper. Do not include fruit or perishable items, unwrapped candy, or sharp objects. Suggestions for stocking fillers will be on the table with the sign up sheet.

Please contact Jane Grays, [LadyJaneGra@aol.com](mailto:LadyJaneGra@aol.com) or 301-937-6392 if you have any questions



### *December Birthdays*

- 1 Motunriyo Oluwafemi
- 3 Ann Rowland
- 7 John Stewart
- 13 Cheryl Grays
- 15 Becky Cavallo, Michael McNealy
- 16 Jennie Owens
- 18 Jan Slingerland
- 26 Lois Rodriguez, Alexandra Scotland
- 27 Rogers Beasley
- 30 Kim Hiner, Maggie Leatherman,  
Maxine Riggelman, Jean Faris



### *December Anniversaries*

- 18 Jeanette & Charles Vannoy  
Susan & Steven Cunningham
- 30 Michael and Gail Belshay  
Charline & Bob Frederick

### *Altar Flowers*

- Dec. 1 Carol Clatterbuck
- Dec. 8 Theresa Timity
- Dec. 15 Beverly Ward
- 22, 29 Open

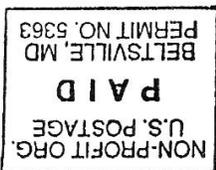


# December 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School	2 7 pm Church Council Meeting	3	4 6:30 pm Maranatha Choir	5 7 pm Chancel Choir	6	7 9 am Breakfast with Santa 11 am – UMW Exec Meeting 12 noon UMW General Meeting
8 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School Second Sunday Lunch 1 pm Youth Fellowship	9 6 pm Worship Committee 7 pm Depression/ Bipolar Support Group 7:30 pm Trustees Meeting	10 10 am Prayer Fellowship	11 6:30 pm Maranatha Choir	12 7 pm Chancel Choir	13	14 9 am Chancel Choir 12 noon Angel Tree 6 pm Bethlehem Idol
15 9 & 11:15 am Worship & Cantata  10:15 am Sunday School	16 12 noon Ellen Hoover Circle	17	18 10 am Susanna Wesley Circle 12 noon Dorcas Circle 6:30 pm Maranatha Choir 7 pm Sisters in Spirit	19 7 pm Chancel Choir	20 11 am Community Place Café  7 pm Friday Live  Food Prep	21 10 am Food Distribution
22 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 1 pm Youth Fellowship	23 7 pm Depression/ Bipolar Support Group	24 10 am Prayer Fellowship 6 pm Family Service 11 pm Candle- light Service	25 10 am Worship Service	26 Church Office Closed	27	28
29 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School	30	31				

Address Service Requested

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