

The Lamplighter

Emmanuel United Methodist Church

August 2012



Pastor Daniel Mejia

“You can do something I can’t do. I can do something you can’t do. Together let us do something beautiful for God.”

- Mother Teresa

I’m writing this article still very sore and in full recovery mode after back-to-back weeks of Vacation Bible School and the youth mission trip to Christiansburg, Va. Yet, while my body is recovering, my faith and spirit are invigorated and transformed by both experiences. Let me begin with Vacation Bible School.

No fewer than 75 children, youth, and adults gathered to participate for a week of Vacation Bible School. Every night we gathered to eat dinner followed by Bible study. My heart was filled with joy as every night our sanctuary was overtaken by children roaming around, singing, and dancing at the beat of the Vacation Bible School theme music. Children from our church and the community through crafts, fun activities, and Bible lessons enjoyed learning about Jesus.

For the adults too Vacation Bible School provided them the opportunity to deepen their faith learning with adult bible lessons.

Then, after an exciting week of Vacation Bible School, 21 of us (15 youth and 6 adults) embarked on a mission trip to Christiansburg, Va. for a week of service. Our task was to repair the homes of low income families. This was our second year in a row participating in this mission trip organized by Fieldstone United Methodist Church. The experience was amazing. The work was hard, the heat was intense but the satisfaction of serving others made our small sacrifices all worth it. Not only that, but while in Christiansburg, our youth had a chance to meet young people from three different congregations who spent their time serving during the week. They ate together, served together, played together, worshipped together, and prayed together. These two weeks allowed me to see so clearly glimpses of

what the Kingdom of God is all about: service, transformation, redemption for Jesus, with Jesus, in Jesus. God’s Kingdom was present in the midst of adults and teenagers working hard and serving Jesus together. God’s Kingdom was present in the midst of our teenagers who prayed, sang, and were excited about worshipping God. God’s Kingdom was present when our young children and older adults were excited to learn about Jesus during our Vacation Bible School.

I want to thank all of you for your prayers, financial support, leadership, and many hours of service that have made this summer amazing and fruitful. May God continue to give Emmanuel many more summers like this, filled with the love and grace of Christ that extends beyond the walls of our church.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Mejia', written over a horizontal line.

Pastor Daniel Mejia





Assistant Pastor Ben Sloan

When I was given the opportunity to travel to Israel/Palestine this summer, I'll admit I didn't know much about the political situation or history there. I knew there was turmoil, and I had heard bits and pieces from the news. However, I couldn't have told you the story of the conflict there. After reading several books, seeing the place firsthand, and speaking with people personally involved, I'm still not sure I could give you an accurate picture. One of the challenges is that each side has a different story, and often these stories directly contradict each other.

One day we visited an Israeli settler who said peace won't work because at former peace talks, the Palestinians rejected a proposal for peace. Right after that we visited a refugee camp where a Palestinian expressed doubts about peace because, at the same peace talks, the Israelis rejected the same proposal for peace. At times in Israel it seemed that there was no truth, only party line, only polemic.

And yet there were also stories and facts that give hope. Going to Israel, I was under the impression from the U.S. media that the land currently occupied by Israel has always been in religious-

based conflict. I was surprised to learn that this is simply not true. The current conflict really began in the 1940's with the creation of the Israeli state and the accompanying Palestinian resistance. This gave me hope because if this conflict was created in the life-span of one generation, it should be able to be fixed in a generation as well. The myth of endless war in the Middle East only serves to distract us from the legitimate claims on both sides. The myth of endless war helps justify the inhumane treatment of "the other side" by caricaturing them as inhuman, intent only on senseless violence, and impossible to negotiate with.

At the end of World War II, the Western world failed to come to grips with the hatred of Jews that was exemplified in the concentration camps and gas chambers of Nazi Germany. Rather than working to fix anti-Semitism in Europe, the solution was proposed of giving the Jews a home in current day Israel where (according to false reports) there was no one living. The slogan "A people without a land for a land without a people" was coined in support of the creation of the state of Israel. The problem was, there were people living in Palestine, and these people were displaced to make room for the Jews that Europe and other places didn't want. The lingering effects of undealt with anti-Semitism still impact Israelis today. Many Israelis feel isolated. They feel threatened by hostile neighbors outside and by potential terrorists inside the country. The state of Israel has erected walls, instituted tough restrictions on Palestinians, and created a powerful standing army because they are committed to never letting something like the holocaust happen again to the Israeli people. Palestinians on the other hand are denied access to

their land and even common public utilities like water and garbage collection. They are restricted from moving freely. Palestinians are even required to have different colored license plates in a policy alarmingly reminiscent of the stars Jews once had to wear. The Palestinians feel abused and ignored by the international community. I can understand the temptation to resort to violence, but aggressive actions from both sides only serve to escalate the tension.

The only viable road to peace I see is the narrow road of non-violence that Jesus describes. Only love and support can change the hearts of Israelis who still carry or have known people who carried the scars and brands from the concentration camps. Only the self-sacrifice of those with land and resources can fix the extreme poverty and landlessness of the displaced Palestinian people.

I also recognize that it is easy for me to diagnose the situation in another country far away. It's easy for me to say what *they* should or shouldn't do. The challenge for me is to live out the ideals I describe above in my life here in the USA. I struggle to find the core legitimate concerns of those I politically disagree with. I wrestle with how to give of the abundance I have been blessed with to others who are in need. I ask myself if I could forgive if violence was done against me or the ones I love. These are some of the questions that the situation in Israel/Palestine compels me wrestle with. These are questions that I think we all do well to ponder.



The Separation Wall in Bethlehem (Photo by Assistant Pastor Ben Sloan)

Church Council

By: Ann Rowland, Chair

Each year the Church Council holds a Planning Retreat to establish goals for the year. This year's goals were inspired by Emmanuel's Mission Statement which reads, EUMC is committed to:

- Creating Unified Communities of Christian Love;
- Sharing our Faith through Teaching and Living the Word of God;
- Helping Those in Need; and,
- Embracing Diversity.

There are a total of six goals. I will share half of them with you in this issue of the Lamplighter and the remaining half in the September issue.

The first goal that falls under the category of "Creating Unified Communities of Christian Love" is well into the planning stage and targeted for implementation in September. Todd Reitzel, Sunday School Superintendent and leader of this endeavor, has gathered a team of church leaders, parents, teens and other interested parties in planning a Friday Night Teen Social Event that will meet every Friday evening for fun and fellowship in a safe environment. Todd will keep us posted on the opening night of this highly anticipated weekly event for teens.

The second goal is one of "Helping Those in Need." We are all well aware of the newly renovated Media Center equipped with computers that are being used to enhance learning for ESOL participants and the Homework Club for children and youth. Patrick Elliott, Church Council Co-Chair, will lead the effort to provide computer support and offer computer classes several times a year for those interested in improving existing skills, learning new skills and in need of vocational training. So, if you have a computer that you don't know how to use, do not despair; help is on the way. A plan should be in place by the end of the year.

The third goal to inform you about at this time falls under the category of "Embracing Diversity." There will be an International Church Service and Luncheon linked to World Communion Sunday on October 7th where we will share a meal consisting of at least 20 different dishes representing 10 countries. The leaders/coordinators for this exciting event are Pat Allen, ESOL Chair, Bobbie Deegan, ESOL teacher and Theresa Timity, Co-Chair of our Food Distribution Ministry. On this World Communion Sunday, this will surely be a special day of celebration through worship and fellowship. More information will follow in the weeks and months ahead.

Homeless Ministry Wish List

The Homeless Ministry would like to thank the members at Emmanuel for their faithful support of this much needed ministry. Without each of you, we would not be able to continue. For the next several months, Emmanuel's Food Distribution Ministry will be collecting school supplies for the fall. Our goal is to collect 200 bags of school supplies. Due to budget constraints, we will not be distributing backpacks, but just the contents. Over the next few months, stores will be having wonderful sales on the school supplies, so please watch the Sunday ads. We are hoping that you will donate a bag or even two. If you would rather give us money to fill a bag, we estimate the cost to be \$12.00. We would like to have all of the supplies by Labor Day.

Each bag should contain the following:

- Composition books (2)
- Crayons (24 count)
- Notebook paper (1 pack)
- Highlighter
- Pencil pouch
- Scissors
- Folders (2)
- 2 or 3 inch binder
- Glue or glue sticks
- Facial Tissue
- Pens
- Subject dividers
- Pencils
- Ruler
- Protractor
- Clorox wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Erasers for pencils



National Night Out

Please be reminded that National Night Out is being celebrated on Tuesday, August 7, between the hours of 6 and 8 p.m. on the grounds of the Beltsville Library on Sellman Road.

The church will have a table there.

If you can help, contact Ernie Kilbourne or Kathy Mellott.



Statue of Christ at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore





AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Chris Butcher, Preston Elliott II
- 3 Ciro Mejia
- 4 Jeanette Vannoy,
- 7 Brennan McGlynn, Hannah Butcher
- 8 Michael Belshay, Jr., Mary Lou Galloway,
Adam Levine
- 9 Carmen Amaya Barahona,
Gregory Stiggers, Jessie Marcus
- 10 Elmo Webb, Lynette Wray
- 13 Aidan Cruz
- 17 Doris Wray
- 18 Grant Midkiff
- 21 Kelsey Storck
- 22 Lynne Miller
- 23 Andrea Onukwubiri
- 24 Carol Clatterbuck
- 25 Christopher Pavelka
- 26 Katie Kaufmann, Alice Mabry,
Pastor Mejia
- 27 Terry Holman
- 28 Javalin Baird
- 29 Helen Akers
- 30 Andrea Onukwubiri
- 31 Justin Huneycutt



AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 10 Helen & Shirley Akers
Patricia & Ralph Guynn
- 15 Betty & Grant Midkiff
- 31 Rebecca & John Cavallo

Altar Flowers



- | | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| August 5 | Elliott's |
| August 12 | |
| August 19 | Janet Doetsch |
| August 26 | |
| September 2 | Beverly Ward |
| September 9 | Dorothy Decker |
| September 16 | John Bouma |
| September 23 | Elsie Cline |
| September 30 | Kathryn Griffin |

AUGUST 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 pm Church Council	2	3 Movie at dusk "How to Train Your Dragon"	4
5 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School	6	7 6-8 pm National Night Out at Beltsville Library 6 pm Worship & Arts Class	8	9	10 Movie at dusk "Toy Story"	11
12 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School No Second Sunday Lunch	13 7 pm Depression/ Bipolar Support Group	14 10 am Prayer Fellowship 6 pm Worship & Arts Class	15	16	17 11 am Community Place Caf�	18
19 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School	20	21	22	23	24 7 pm Food Preparation	25 10 am Food Distribution
26 9 & 11:15 am Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 12:30 pm UMW Exec. Meeting in FH	27 7 pm Depression/ Bipolar Support Group	28 10 am Prayer Fellowship	29	30	31	

In This Issue

Pastor's Message

Ben Sloan's Commentary

Church Council

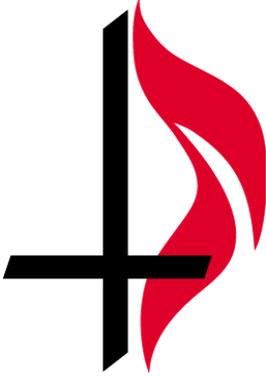
Homeless Ministry Wish List

National Night Out

Photo of Christ Statue at Johns Hopkins Medical Center

Birthdays, Anniversaries and Altar Flowers

August Calendar



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Emmanuel United Methodist Church

