

The Spire



January, 2012

Loch Raven United Methodist Church

New Members Class



There will be a NEW MEMBERS CLASS on Sunday, January 29th, for adults who want to join Loch Raven UMC. We will meet in the downstairs parlor from 12:15 PM-1:30 PM. This class offers a wonderful opportunity to learn about your faith journey, the Baltimore Washington Conference, United Methodist history, Loch Raven Church, and a few other things. It's an opportunity for our newest attenders to bring questions for the pastor. It doesn't matter whether you're interested in transferring your membership from another United Methodist Church or another denomination or if you are a brand new seeker---this is your opportunity. If you have been attending and are interested in going deeper with your relationship to Loch Raven Church this is your time. Please drop an email (info@lrumc.org) or phone call (410 825-0900) to the church office or mention your interest to Pastor Cliff.

Hope for The New Year

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. --Luke 2:25

The New Year is upon us. It's a time to reflect on the events of the past. It's a time to look ahead with hope to the future. It's always odd to me, when we begin to remember the events of the past, how easy it is to remember the bad things. It's easy to become discouraged if that's all we remember.

In one of George Moore's novels, he wrote about the peasants in Ireland during a severe famine. Many of the people were given jobs building roads with primitive equipment. For a time, the people worked with their picks, shovels, and wheelbarrows. They were so grateful to have employment, to have a reason to receive their bread. After a time, however, they discovered that the roads they were building ended up in dreary bogs and swamps. In reality, the roads they were building led nowhere, and with that realization, a tremendous change came over the workers. Their cheerfulness disappeared. The observation was made that "roads that lead to nowhere are hard to build."

We cannot live without hope in our lives. If we can't see light at the end of the tunnel its no wonder our days are dreary, dark, and joyless. In the above Scripture passage Jerusalem had become a desolate wasteland of impoverished souls. The aging Simeon, near death, waited patiently, clinging to the hope that he would see the promised Messiah in his lifetime. A young woman named Mary, with her husband Joseph, brought in their child Jesus. They placed him in Simeon's arms and Simeon said, "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace...for my eyes have beheld your salvation." (Luke 2:25)

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All signed articles, letters, announcements, and other information of interest are welcomed and considered for publication.

The deadline for the February issue is **Sunday, January 8, at 11:00 a.m.** *Electronic Submission:* You may send articles by e-mail to: [njkwilliams@yahoo.com](mailto:njk.williams@yahoo.com) or place articles in the Church Office's newsletter box.

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Lenten Bible Study

Responsibilities. We all have them, but we don't all take them as seriously as we ought to. Wouldn't it be great, though, if we all took responsibility for the things we are responsible for? It's time to stop the finger-pointing and excuse-making and to remove the "ir" in "irresponsible." We'll be using Andy Stanley's book *Taking Responsibility for Your Life*. The session titles are: "Let the blames begin," "The Disproportionate Life," "This is No Time to Pray," "Embracing your Response Ability."

This four-week Bible study begins February 27th on Monday nights at 7:00 PM and will be repeated on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 AM. Please contact the church office at 410 825-0900 or at info@lrumc.org so that we can order the correct number of books.

Confirmation Signup

CONFIRMATION CLASSES will begin Sunday, February 12th, at 10:00 AM during the Sunday school hour. If you have a child aged 12-18 (6th through 12th grade) who wants to confirm their faith and become a full member of Loch Raven UMC please contact the church office to register them or if you have any questions. Classes will run for 13 weeks. We will not have class on Easter or Mother's Day. We will receive the confirmands into membership on Pentecost Sunday on May 27th.



The Year

The Year is closed, the record made,
The last deed done, the last word said.
The memory alone remains
Of all its joys, its griefs, its gains.
And now with purpose full and clear,
We turn to meet another year.

—Robert Browning

Outreach and Evangelism

Katherine McKinney

Catch on fire with enthusiasm and people will come for miles to watch you burn.

—John Wesley

Hope for the New Year

(Continued from page 1)

The promised presence of Jesus in our lives today brings salvation to us. His presence offers to us the promise of kingdom living right here and now. His presence offers us the promise of eternal life. His presence offers us grace-filled, forgiving relationships. His presence offers us a oneness with God, which ultimately makes us whole and can bring healing to us.

In Jesus Christ, God has given us not a road that leads nowhere, but a road that leads to God, the Creator. He wants the best for us and loves us with a love that surpasses all understanding. This is what the New Year holds for us as individuals. This is what the New Year holds for us as a church. This is what we have to offer to those who don't yet know this Jesus. May this New Year of 2012 bring wonderful blessings to you and your family.

Grace and Peace,
Cliff



Operation Christmas Child

We collected a total of 82 boxes!!

If you packed a shoe box or wrote a check to cover shipping of the boxes - Thanks to EVERYONE who participated in the Operation Christmas Child project. If it was your first time to pack a box, I hope you enjoyed the experience and will do it again next year.

Because of your generous spirit, somewhere a child is smiling and learning about the love of Jesus and the true meaning of Christmas.

Yvonne Horn
Missions Committee

Board of Child Care Update

This year our congregation donated more than 130 cans of green beans and cranberry sauce for the Board of Child Care Thanksgiving Food Drive. 210 Thanksgiving baskets were provided to families served by the Board of Child Care. Thank you for your continued support of the Board of Child Care.

Leslie Christopher
Keyperson



January Birthdays

- 1 Laurie Collidge
- 2 Gregory Sinkler
- 14 Scott Eshelman
- 15 Jessica Lautenschlager
- 16 Owen Williams
- 17 Katherine McKinney
- 21 Stephen Ferguson
- 22 Jim Wagner
- 25 Jamie Ferguson
- 26 Marge Tracey
- 26 Joseph Caleb
- 29 Ev Dorfler
- 29 Carolyn Lutz



United Methodist Women January Schedule

“Women in Christ” Circle
Monday, January 2
7:30 pm—Room 202
Lesson 3—Abraham and Sarah

Phyllis Downes Circle
Tuesday, January 3
10 am—Brunch at
Nancy Gillotti's

NO GENERAL MEETING

From the Mailbox

Dear Loch Raven Church
Family,

Thank you so much for your cards, prayers, gifts, and kind words throughout this holiday season. It has been a joy to be with you and we look forward to a wonderful New Year together.

Take care,
Cliff, for the Webner family

Dear Loch Raven Church
Family,

Thank you so much for your generous love gift and "memory book." I will treasure your goodbyes and written remembrances it contains.

Loch Raven is a very special place of love, friendship and kindness. God's hand is on you all and I know that he will continue to do wonderful things through all of you. I miss you all very much and think of you often.

Thank you again, and I wish blessings, peace and joy to all of you.

Your sister and friend,
Jennifer Holbrook

2346 Gerritt Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146

November 23, 2011

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Child Care, its Board of Directors, staff and children, I would like to offer my sincere gratitude for your contribution in the amount of \$600.00 in response to our recent appeal for our back-to-school fund. Your generosity shows that you care deeply about the welfare of the children staying with us at the Board of Child Care.

As the summer rapidly comes to a close and the new school year approaches, we think about the children and how, for some, this will be the first time in their lives that they will be excited about learning. With your blessings of support, the children will be provided with the tools needed to better themselves and, in turn, build the foundation needed to become productive members of society. Some of the children will go on to college, while some will choose to enter the workforce. Either way, having a quality education now will help them succeed in their adult lives, both in their work and their communities.

Many of the children that come to stay with us are without even the most basic

of necessities. Your gift helps us to provide the children with the supplies needed for their education, as well as clothing, shoes and other little extras. Your contribution enables the children to concentrate on their studies and their dreams for the future. These young ones will be able to return to school with a higher self-esteem, knowing that they are prepared for what lies ahead.

Because of you and others like you, the children here at the Board of Child Care can witness first hand how education is viewed as one of the most valuable treasures one can hold in their possession. Although the children in our care are here because of unfortunate circumstances, they come to realize that they are fortunate to have the opportunity to receive a quality education. We thank you and wish you many blessings and ask that you continue to pray for our young ones!

Thank you for your continued support of our ministry.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas L. Curcio
President and CEO
Board of Child Care

Happy New Year ♪ *Happy New Year* ♪ *Happy New Year* ♪

A Place for You

How much do you know about the Bible? Or Christian history? Or different ways of praying? Or Christian stewardship? Or Christian theology?

Do you even know why most—but not all—Christians worship on Sundays?

The point is, no matter what your age, there is much to learn from classes offered at the church. If you are interested in learning about a certain religious topic, speak to the pastor.

Look for the smile which breaks forth on the pastor's face. Why? Because an educated congregation thrills pastors. Learning is part of loving God with one's mind. Christian education helps us understand what living as Christians is all about. So go ahead, ask about a class that might interest you.

"It is not enough to have a good mind," said the French philosopher, Rene' Descartes. "The main thing is to use it well." Learning about Christian beliefs and practices is using one's mind quite well. Your church is a place for you to learn. It has a class for you.



For by
GRACE
you have
been saved
through
FAITH ...
it is the gift
of **GOD ...**

Ephesians 2:8, NRSV

Six New Year Resolutions

1. Forget the past and honor God more.
2. Live for Christ in the world.
3. Trust God with a strong faith.
4. Remain faithful to my church.
5. Witness to the lost.
6. Cultivate the talents God has given me for His glory.

