



January 7, 2021



Grace and peace to you from Pastor Bill:

Disheartening, shocking, and sobering is the sum of my response to the rampage on the US Capitol yesterday. January 6, 2021, the Feast of the Epiphany, was marred by domestic violence perpetrated by criminals who listened to the voices of feeble, flawed, and failed political leaders. Chants of "Jesus is my Savior, and Trump is my President" projected from the mouths of insurrectionists whose minds and spirits were twisted and deluded by an evil charisma. The Gospels' Jesus arrives into the world of chaos, cruelty, and calumny as the unquenchable Light of the World, not as the acolyte of darkness.

On the day of his baptism, as Mark tells it, Jesus "saw heaven splitting open and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down on him." In the light of heaven's epiphany, Jesus heard the Father's voice of love and delight, which is the beginning of his radical ministry of light exposing evil, of love dismantling hate, and of loyalty defeating fear. The Jesus of the insurrectionists' chant on the steps of the hallowed Capitol is unknown to me. The Jesus of Mark is my Savior. Which Savior is yours? One way to condemn the horrific acts inflicted yesterday is to commit to **baptismal renewal**.

Sunday, January 10th, is the celebration of the Baptism of the Lord. **I call the**

members and friends of LUMC to renew your baptism during the LiveStream Service at 9:00 a.m. When you [click here](#), you'll access an In-Home Baptismal Renewal Liturgy I've written for the occasion. You'll need a small bowl of water ready before the service.

Acts of violence, sedition, and insurrection were executed on the US Capitol yesterday as they were against the life and body of Jesus Christ on the day of his crucifixion. Christ's Way was to be the Light and to walk into death and resurrection. Paul wrote, "Therefore, we were buried together with Christ through baptism into his death so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too can walk in newness of life. If we were united together in a death like his, we will also be united together in a resurrection like his." This way is the hope of all genuine Christians.



New Virtual Office Hours in 2021!

Virtual office hours are now **Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.** Please leave messages on the church's voicemail system, and they'll be returned as quickly as possible. Or, send an email to office@lansdaleumc.org if you need assistance. As we continue to navigate the pandemic emergency, we'll keep you posted on changes to activities at LUMC.

New Leaders in 2021!

Last October, LUMC's leaders met for the annual Charge Conference with the new district superintendent, Dr. Andrew Foster. At that conference, interim officers in the church's administrative life were elected to serve through June 30, 2021. LUMC will return to holding a Church Conference to elect leaders sometime in March or April of this year. On January 14, members will have access to the church's current officary. The Nominations and Leadership Development Committee begins working

this month on developing a new slate of nominees. We thank those who have answered the call to serve!

New Budget for 2021!

At the December meeting of the Church Council, a budget for 2021 was passed. You can review the new budget and other financial updates on the Members Only Login section of the website: lansdaleumc.org/members. If you haven't set up your account, refer to an e-mail you received in late August, 2020, or contact [Becky](#) in the office.



Our Service is Simulcast Each Sunday on Facebook Live and YouTube!

Join us Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on our Facebook Page [click here](#), or YouTube Channel [click here](#) for a weekly praise, prayer, and proclamation celebration of God's love. We love discovering who worships with us, so [click here](#) to sign our Virtual Friendship Pad. Access our weekly digital bulletin to sing along and read the lessons, [click here](#), and you can listen to sermons when you [click here](#)! Our doors may be closed to worshippers right now, but our hearts, minds, and hands continue to serve. You're welcome to join us anytime!



2020 Christmas Offering - There's Still Time! Grand Total: \$5,496! The Goal: \$8,000! Last Year: \$5,700!

For many years, LUMC stood out among the 80% or so of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference churches that remits 100% of connectional giving through three apportionments: Connectional Ministries Fund (CMF), which is monies to run the annual conference, offering training, and giving grants to churches blazing trails in new ways of ministry;

General Church Fund (GCF), which is monies to maintain the governance and infrastructure of The United Methodist Church, like paying bishops salaries, general agency funds to run vital witnesses of Christ's love globally; and the World Service Fund (WSF), which is monies to underwrite the mission work of the UMC through the General Board of Global Ministries and UMCOR, like paying missionaries salaries, buying mission supplies, and aiding in disaster relief.

But in 2019, LUMC fell short of the long-standing practice of paying the apportionments 100%. And we're falling short significantly in 2020. Yes, the pandemic emergency disrupts giving, and many churches are far behind. Happily and gratefully, we'll remit 100% of WSF (\$6,200) in 2020. We're behind remitting to the GCF by \$4,800, and it's likely we won't remit 100% of that fund. Of more concern is that we're behind remitting to the CMF by \$18,800. It's this fund that connects us locally as UMs. Be clear; we are on track in paying health insurance, pension, property and liability insurance, workers compensation insurance, and group health insurance for retired clergy. We've fallen behind in dollars for maintaining the work of the conference.

It might surprise you to learn that LUMC has another longstanding tradition: 100% of the annual December Christmas Offering is deposited in the Operating Fund to keep us on track paying the church's bills. That's because annual financial commitments don't meet the church's needs. Last year, the offering raised \$5,700. In 2020, the Church Council is earmarking 100% of the Christmas Offering to remit to the CMF. Can we raise \$8,000? Yes, we can! Please prayerfully consider your Christmas Offering in 2020. Use the envelope in your box or make a gift online at lansdaleumc.org/giving. As monies come in, we'll report out how close we are to the goal. Wouldn't it be fantastic if we reported we exceeded the goal?! Let's try. The Lord's gift is a profound love in Jesus Christ. Let's celebrate that gift with a Christmas gift of our own! Merry Christmas!



Zoom Bible Studies

You can join your congregation-friends and me at two Bible Studies during the Season of Advent. We meet on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. and Thursday evenings at 7:00 by Zoom! As we've done so far, we'll look at the Tuesday and Thursday daily lectionary readings for the season. You can make the study a spiritual practice to get you ready for, perhaps, the most unusual Advent and Christmas seasons in our lifetimes! I hope you join in! Please contact [Becky](#) in the office for the new Zoom meeting ID and password. It has been changed.



Can We Count On You to Keep Our Ark Afloat?

Make Your Commitment Today!

Grand Total Operating Fund: 34 Commitments,

\$129,390

Grand Total Improvement Fund: 12

Commitments, \$7,242

Grand Total "Give as Can": 5

Covid-19's disruption is still waving across the spectrum of our lives. The weeks between Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, and the New Year celebrations look to be quite difficult from a public health perspective. Covid-19 disrupts daily routines at home, school, and work. It disrupts holiday traditions, weddings, funerals, and graduations. It disrupts access to travel, medical care, entertainment, and places of worship. It disrupts the economy and industry. It disrupts food security, creating miles-long lines at food pantries. A vaccine is on the horizon, presenting the first glimpse of light that this too shall pass! Click [here](#) to read more of Pastor Bill's letter.



Share Your Joys and Concerns With Us!

You can send a prayer request to us in two ways: Click the picture to be taken to the prayer request page of our website, or send an e-mail to the [office](mailto:office@lansdaleumc.org). Our prayer team wants to pray for your requests. Any requests submitted will be privately delivered to our prayer warriors within 24 hours, and will be kept confidential unless you instruct otherwise.



Website News!

Click on the e-CR banner on our website and go directly to this week's issue of the e-CR. Click [here](#) to try it! If you haven't set up your Members Only account, please refer to the e-mail you received in late August, 2020, or contact [Becky](#) in the office. Our website is always evolving. Please be sure to explore it often.



Return to In-Person Worship Is On Hold!

By Pastor Bill Lentz

Friends in Christ! There's great interest in returning to in-person worship as soon as possible. People are missing the church terribly. I know this very well. I miss seeing and worshipping with you too. However, we're still in a pandemic emergency, and it's not safe, faithful, or prudent to return yet. The spread of Covid-19 is more virulent now than in the spring and summer. While a vaccine is in sight, it won't likely be available for mass inoculations until well into 2021. So, for now, let's see how the second wave progresses. I'll continue to monitor daily the medical status of the county and borough. I'll keep the congregation posted. My prayers are with you as I

eagerly await the return! Be well. worship during this time of Covid-19.

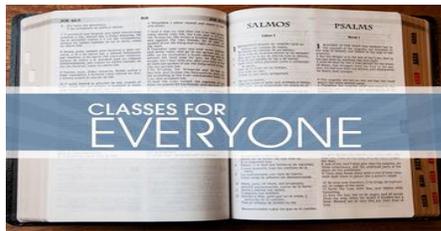
Peace. Click [here](#) to read Bishop Peggy Johnson's letter concerning returning to in-person worship.



Lansdale UMC Children's Ministry on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)

Miss Liz Bonner posts interesting items for our children to watch, read and do throughout the week. Click the image to join us on Facebook.

Miss Liz also LiveStreams the weekly Sunday School lesson on our YouTube channel at 10:00 each Sunday morning. Click here to access our YouTube Channel.



New Horizons Fellowship

The New Horizons topic for discussion on Jan. 10 will be "What is Repentance? - Receiving Grace and Returning to God" based on Hosea 14. Anyone is welcome to join our Zoom meeting at

10:00am.

Link: Click [here](#)

Meeting ID: 875 4237 2475

Passcode: 710204

Wesleyan Class

Wesleyan Class will continue with inspirational meditations until we begin our Lenten study. All are welcome to participate. Contact Verna Colliver (vmcolliver@gmail.com) if you want to be added to the distribution list



Special Lansdale UMC Collection

Covid-19 Impact Fund Is Making a Difference

Sometimes, simply making a difference is all that's needed. The Covid-19 Impact Fund has been doing just that! Reaching about \$15,000 at its start, we've distributed over \$4,000 to pay 6 rents, make 1 car repair, buy 1 bundle of groceries, help one person get current with their electric bill, help one person get current with their health insurance premiums, and partner with another UMC to provide Christmas presents for 2 families. We are working with several churches in the borough as well as Manna on Main to share the interviewing of those in need and the cost associated with helping. It's been a rewarding experience. In addition to the congregational and community care, we've also paid to buy PPE to return to worship safely at the right time, and pay for costs associated with the LiveStream broadcasts on Sunday mornings.



Save Your Redner's Receipts!

United
Methodist
Women
FAITH · HOPE · LOVE IN ACTION

The UMW is still collecting them. You can either put them in the mail slot by the 4th Street door or simply mail them to the church. Thank you!



Need Help With Remote Learning?

We have a person in our congregation, certified in teaching K12 with an area of interest in math, who is offering their services to any parent or student having trouble with remote learning. If you're a parent who needs some guidance in how to assist your child(ren) learning remotely, please contact the church office, and Becky can put you in contact with them. Help is available for both parents and students.

UPDATED! – COVID-19 STATUS – NEW!

On **Thursday, January 7th**, the Commonwealth of PA recorded 9,698 new coronavirus cases, a 50% increase in 48 hours. The positivity rate in the Commonwealth averages at 15%, which signals the virus is not under control. Montgomery County's positivity rate is near 14%, which means an outbreak is still in progress. LUMC will remain in its current limited opening status until further notice, except for the LiveStream service on Sunday mornings and other approved exceptions made by the Pastor or the Trustees. Faithful, prudent, and safe decisions will be announced when applicable. In the meantime, please commit yourselves to prayers for all those who have suffered personal and economic losses during the pandemic emergency.



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Our mailing address is:

300 N. Broad Street, Lansdale, PA 19446

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Lansdale United Methodist Church · 300 N Broad St · Lansdale, PA 19446-2453 · USA

