



April 15, 2021



### **It's the Third Sunday of Easter on April 18!**

Christ is risen! The Third Sunday is known as *Jubilant Sunday*. The traditional Gospel reading for the day focuses on the unlikely joyful response to Jesus' revelation to his apostles in John 16 that he will be leaving them to return to the Father. He tells

them not to despair as the Father will send an Advocate (the Holy Spirit) in his place. He, too, will return in resurrection glory, and the apostles will see him alive! His "aliveness" isn't zombie-like, nor is he one among the "walking dead." Jesus' resurrection is a "new thing," a "new creation," a "completion of creation." We'll explore this theme: A resurrection body! What's it mean? Is there a contemporary meaning that may excite new believers? Is there a new theory of physics? A quantum mechanical miracle? Or is it God's completion of the Original Creation? God's high regard for the human body is beyond question in the Apostles' Creed. In our hearts, we're to believe in the body's resurrection. This affirmation suggests that we'll one day be with God in bodies that have recognizable forms. The treatment of the human body with dignity and respect is also beyond question. Jesus greets strangers on the road to Emmaus, the resurrection Lord. They recognize him in the breaking of the bread, the symbol of his body. And they believe! I suggest that Vincent van Gogh's up-close painting of muddy shoes is a metaphor for walking on the road with Jesus. Join us on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#)!



**Pastor Bill Takes Time to Plan!** -- Pastor Bill will take some time apart **from April 19-30** to plan to transition to his new appointment. While away, PB will conduct Zoom Bible Studies and keep up with

routine church meetings by Zoom. With gratitude, the Rev. Tom Davis-Shappel has consented to serve as PB's pastoral care coverage. Pastor Tom is a retired elder from our conference serving interim local church appointments in retirement. Pastor Bill knows him to be an excellent pastor. If you require pastoral care during this time apart, please contact the church office by telephone at (215) 855-8364 or e-mail at [office@lansdaleumc.org](mailto:office@lansdaleumc.org). Becky Conrad will make necessary contacts and inform Pastor Tom and Pastor Bill of needs arising. Please be in prayer for PB's time to plan for his transition.



**Church Finances Looking Up...!** -- In more ways than one, church finances are looking up. Looking up to Christ and his church's mission (to make disciples for Jesus Christ through the world's transformation) has inspired tremendously generous giving during the pandemic emergency. "Thank you!" seems inadequate to the colossal endeavor, but the gratitude expressed to all our givers is genuine and heartfelt.

Steady giving kept our ark afloat on the choppy sea of uncertainty. Givers stuck with the church by expressing their consistent commitment to funding missions, relief funds, and the church treasury. New givers (non-members) who connect with the online LiveStream community have given steadily and faithfully.

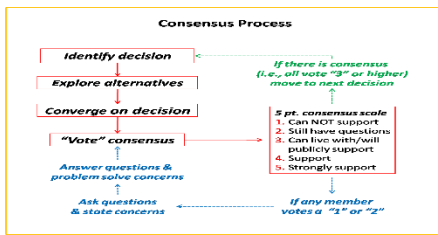
Year-end into first-quarter new year giving is looking up! In round numbers, \$96,000 was received, and \$92,000 was disbursed in the first quarter. Cash on hand tops \$55,000. The satisfaction of reporting these figures nearly led Warren and Darren to perform a Zoom Chicken Dance at the recent Finance Committee meeting! When these two dedicated servants are optimistic, it's time to praise the Lord. Their careful monitoring of finances is a vital gift to the church. A majority of envelope holders are giving to the operating and improvement funds. Electronic giving is increasing and helps to keep cash flow healthy, which is critical to every non-profit organization, including the church. This year's pledges cover 51% of the budget, which is another indication of things looking up!

The Covid-19 Impact Fund is looking up! An initial anonymous gift last year of \$10,000 helped us establish the fund and grow it by \$13,000 more. So far, the fund has

disbursed more than \$9,000 to soften the economic impact of Covid-19 for church and community people. It's paid rents and utility bills, fixed cars, purchased medicine, and fed people. Two government stimulus checks and extended unemployment benefits have helped many Americans, but for the short-term only. Sometime soon, back rents and delayed payments will come due, and people will need more help. Let's keep funding the help!

Looking up! The slide accompanying this article shows a young woman looking up as money is flowing. Is the money flowing down or up? Yes! God gives us abundant blessings flowing down to make life possible. We then return offerings of deep thanks for life's privilege of serving God with all we are and have!

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise God all creatures here below, praise God above all heavenly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Amen!*



### Formal Consensus Training Set for May 2nd & 16th! --

The Southern Montgomery County (SOMOCO) Mission Link of the East District of the UMC plans two training sessions on the decision-making method called "Formal Consensus." The training is prompted by important decisions that UM

churches will make following the next General Conference. The UMC is in organizational flux about the authority of Scripture, the place of the LGBT+ community in the church's life, and how we understand the church's core mission. It's quite likely that all UMC local churches will face a decision about joining one of several new denominations that'll spin-off from the UMC. How will the decisions be made? Up or down voting? Win-lose voting? Or consensus voting to arrive at a peaceable decision? Jess Umlauf, a colleague of Pastor Bill's, will facilitate the training. Here are Jess' descriptions of the two sessions:

"Formal Consensus is a peaceful group decision-making process that aims at weaving everyone's best ideas and key concerns, often resulting in surprising and more creative solutions. It is neither compromise nor voting. In the first training session, an introduction to Formal Consensus, you'll understand the basic dynamics which drive group decision-making and learn the foundations, process, and proposal structure critical to successful use of Formal Consensus."

"After gaining an understanding of the basic structure and foundation of Formal Consensus in session one, the second session will help you learn about creating additional shared values and guiding principles for decision-making, learn the roles to play and to set agendas, understanding and reviewing impediments to Formal Consensus, and practice examples of group discussion techniques."

With the training in hand, local churches stand a better than fair chance at making important decisions about their futures with a lot less mess! **All Church Council members will find this material helpful. Everyone can learn these skills for their personal and professional lives as well. Information about accessing the Zoom sessions is forthcoming. Please send an e-mail to [office@lansdaleumc.org](mailto:office@lansdaleumc.org) indicating your interest in attending the virtual sessions on Sundays, May 2nd and May 16th, from 2:00-3:30 p.m.**



**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!



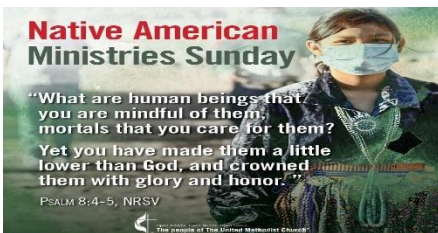
**In-Person Worship Survey** -- We invite you to take an online worship service to aid in planning for a return to in-person worship. Optimism grows daily about returning to in-person worship as more and more Americans are vaccinated for the Covid-19 virus. Vaccinations are key to returning safely. Your

participation will help immensely in making decisions about returning. The asterisk (\*) indicates that all questions require a response, or your answers won't be included in the survey analysis. Please answer all the questions, so the best data is revealed. Click [here](#) to go directly to the survey. Thank you!



The April 14, 2021, issue of the **NewSpirit Digest** is [here](#). From the Digest, you can access the Spring, 2021, Edition of the NewSpirit Newspaper, or you can go directly to the Newspaper by clicking [here](#).

You can also access the recording and PowerPoint slides of the webinar, "Vaccines, Variants and the Road Ahead," presented by Dr. Elsen Jacob and Dr. Susan Jacob, or you can directly to the webinar by clicking [here](#).



**Native American Ministries Sunday -- April 18, 2021** -- Your offering supports ministries to Native Americans in rural, urban, and reservation areas and provides scholarships to UM schools of theology. Food staples cultivated by indigenous peoples include corn, beans, squash, potatoes, pumpkins,

sunflowers, tomatoes, peppers, and wild rice. The coordinator for the Committee on Native American Ministries for the Tennessee Conference of The United Methodist Church, Mary T. Newman, shares some of the food preservation methods used by indigenous peoples. Watch Native American Food Preservation - **A**

**UMCommunications video** [here](#). Remember our Native American brothers and sisters during this pandemic and celebrate their gifts to our church family and communities. In 2020 United Methodists gave \$273,741 to the Native American Ministries Sunday offering. Thank you for your generosity! You can support NAM Sunday in 3 easy ways: Snail mail your check payable to LUMC with the memo line: "Native American Ministries" and put it in your Blue Envelope. You can go online safely and securely [here](#) to make a contribution today. Click the "Giving" dropdown menu and search for *Native American Ministries*. Or, you can send a text message of your gift to 73256 with the message "LansdaleFirstUMC." Thank you for your generous support!



**Soul Sisters Circle** -- All women are invited to attend the Soul Sisters Circle Meeting on **Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm on zoom**. Judy Mills will have a devotion and the lesson will be led by Maryellen



Reinmiller.

Join Zoom Circle Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88400915553?pwd=NlVpY29zTjIkvemRzU3B1djBJNSt2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 884 0091 5553

Passcode: 708565



**EARTH DAY April 22, 2021 -- Creation Justice Ministries has chosen Faithful Resilience as its theme for Earth Day 2021 --**

In preparation for the social, physical and spiritual storms of the climate crisis, faith communities must take a proactive stance towards resilience. We are asked to consider how we are anticipating, preparing for, and “bouncing forward” into a just, sustainable, and resilient community. We can work in small ways toward “resilience.” Click [here](#) to go to the Church and Society page of our website to learn how we can help restore our earth by protecting monarch butterflies. You will also find a link for instructions to plant milkweed to help protect monarch butterflies; it is a project you can do at home.

Church and Society



**Higher Education Scholarships from the EPAUMC**

-- April 26 is rapidly approaching. On that date, the Education Society of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church will be accepting grant applications to assist worthy individuals with defraying the cost of higher education for the 2021-2022 school year. The application is available on the Conference website. It can be accessed as “Education Society Grants” [here](#). All applications received in the Conference Office (between and including) April 26 to May 10 will be considered for a grant. Like last year, all applications will be considered. Unless there is some disqualification, grant recipients will be randomly selected. If you have questions, please contact the Education Society Chairperson, Al Adey [here](#).



**April's Mission Emphasis - Mission Opportunity with Bethel Hill UMC** -- After Jesus' resurrection, he spent 40 days appearing to his followers and encouraging them to continue his mission of loving God, loving neighbors, and proclaiming the coming of the New Kin-ship. As he ascended to heaven, he sent

his people on a mission that continues with us. **From April 9-11**, volunteers built a house frame in the Lehigh Valley. Click [here](#) to see pictures from the build. You can still contribute to defray the material's costs and build a fund for future endeavors. Click [here](#) to go to our website's giving page to contribute to our monthly mission emphasis. All donations sent will be in loving honor of *Peter Noll, Jim Newell, Jim Fisher, Bob Snyder, George Starrett, and Merrill Alderfer*, whose dedication to missions was life-changing. You can make a life-changing gift today.



**Celebrating the Life of Peter Noll** -- On Saturday, May 22, from 1:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Mary Noll will be celebrating Peter's life. Please click on [this link](#) for the invitation and to RSVP. ***Please read the entire invitation.*** If you plan to attend, you must sign up for a time slot. This celebration will be outdoors and will be following Covid-19 protocols.

**SUMMER  
INTERN**

**Arch Street United  
Methodist Church/The Center - Philadelphia is  
Looking for a Summer Ministry Intern**

The Summer Ministry Team Intern will engage the congregation and its community partners in developing and implementing faith strengthening, community building and justice-seeking activities. Using pastoral care and community organizing strategies, the intern will recruit, train and engage congregants and

community members in creating sustainable connections. The Summer Ministry Intern must be committed to working in solidarity with Serenity House Community Center (SHCC), The People's Garden community and Grace Cafe. The People's Garden, SHCC and Grace Cafe are extension ministries of Arch Street UMC/ The Center-Philadelphia. The Center Philadelphia is the non-profit organization of Arch Street UMC. Arch Street UMC is a Sanctuary Church, a Justice-Seeking Congregation and a [Reconciling](#) Congregation committed to grassroots faith-based movements for social change. Click [here](#) for full details.



**Zoom Bible Studies Continue!** -- You can join your congregation, friends, and Pastor Bill at two Zoom Bible Studies each week during Lent. The **Tuesday mornings** at 10:00 a.m. gathering will remain as a study of the appointed lectionary readings for each of the Tuesdays in Lent. On **Thursday evenings** at 7:00

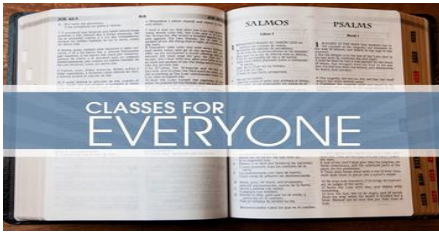
p.m. during Lent, Pastor Bill will lead a **Lenten Bible Study** called *Behold the Lamb, Behold the Man*, a biblical and theological examination of the *Lamb of God* title for Jesus used in the New testament. Make the studies a spiritual practice to help you practice the means of grace during the seasons of Lent and Easter. Contact [Becky](#) for the Zoom Meeting links to access the studies!



**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** -- On April 18th, New Horizons will be discussing the topic titled "Heartburn From the Stranger Dead Ahead" drawing from verses of Luke 24. We meet at 10:00 a.m. following the Sunday morning worship service via Zoom (the connection details are below). Anyone is welcome to

join at that time by clicking [here](#).

Meeting ID: 875 4237 2475      Passcode: 710204

**Wesleyan Class** -- The Wesleyan Class will continue with Reflections and meditation on the topic "Life After the Pandemic" with occasional tie-in to the Sunday sermon. It will be sent by email to class members and others who wish to be on the distribution list. It will continue until the end of May. Contact Verna Colliver ([vmcolliver@gmail.com](mailto:vmcolliver@gmail.com)) if you want to be added to the distribution list

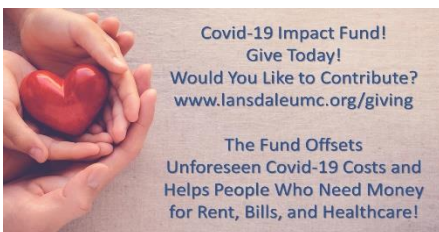


**Conversations on Race** -- Conversations on Race recently resumed with an analysis of the presidential election results and what they say about racism in America. Our group decided to concentrate its efforts on a meaningful Lenten

experience to face the "isms" (racism, sexism, classism) that keep us from meeting our neighbors eye-to-eye as equals in Christ's eyes, on a level plain. If you'd like to help plan the experience, you're welcome to join the conversation. The next Zoom Meeting will be announced soon. Here's the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87919827576pwd=NWJlZlZld3V0dtRitERWVKdmcxRDhUdz09>;

Meeting ID: 879 1982 7576; Passcode: 573307.



### **Special Lansdale UMC Collection**

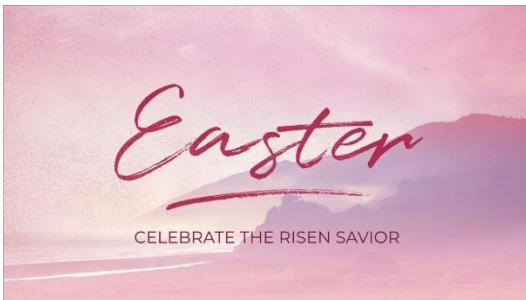
#### **Covid-19 Impact Fund Is Making a Difference**

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 \$5,200 to pay 10 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.

**Click on an image below for more information:**



**UPDATED! – COVID-19 STATUS – NEW!**

**Caution and Optimism!**

Currently, Montco's case count is escalating, which is not the best news. The British variant of Covid-19 is in the county. At current case levels, the county remains in the **very high risk** category according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and Montgomery County health authorities. The test positivity rate has risen to **8%**, which suggests that the virus isn't under control and that cases are undercounted. Vaccinations are proceeding, which is great news. Vaccinations will get us back to in-person worship in the quickest way. Please consider prayerfully receiving one of the very safe and effective vaccines. For the time being, caution is the wisest course of action. LUMC will remain in its current status of limited openings for LiveStream worship and other approved uses. Let your prayers flow for the many who are suffering and have died, and for the many who grieve and mourn.



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**Our mailing address is:**

300 N. Broad Street, Lansdale, PA 19446

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