



The Window into the heart of

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

Volume 1, Number 1, Holiday 2015

Our Vision: How are we doing?

by John Esaiias, Chair of the Church Council

Our church's Vision continues to become a reality as we progress through the church year.

We are emphasizing Bible study, as a new group is studying the New Testament during an eight week course. To provide assistance to our pastor, a team has been formed to instruct our confirmands. This allows Pastor Tom to teach various Sunday School classes.

New people continue to be attracted to our Terrific Tuesday program, even though they may not be part of our worshipping community. We are reaching out to people from the community; our Fall Festival proved to be successful with approximately 150 attending, many who are not members. Five new member orientation sessions have been held as we received 18 new members.

Our youth group continues to engage in a wide variety of activities under the new leadership of Bethany Lockie. The group conducted a successful work camp in Appalachia this summer.

Our Food Lift is growing, as a group of men and women transports food donated from businesses to worthy organizations, including our Food Pantry, Family Promise, the North Side Lunch Program and the Thanksgiving meal.

Our Worship Advisory Committee coordinated a humor themed worship service that was well received. The congregation oversubscribed the new hymnals that enhance our worship with contemporary hymns so that additional hymnals need to be ordered. The congregation has been receptive to this new addition to worship.

The congregation responded well to the Capital Campaign so that the urgent projects will be completed before the end of the year: parsonage roof replaced, Scott Road entrance stabilized and repaired, and a new electrical panel installed for the sanctuary.

In This Issue

<i>Story</i>	<i>Page</i>
Pastor Tom's Page	2
Cookie Sale, Music, Thanksgiving	3
Weekday Ministries	4
Poinsettias, Missions	5
Events & Calendar	6-7
WHOM Team Tips	8

The Window

by Monica Kao, Communications Coordinator

Welcome to *The Window*, Volume 1, Number 1, the first issue under the new name.

Choosing a name that reflects who we are and our message was a challenge. Many thanks to the people who offered thoughts and suggestions.

The name, *The Window*, identifies the purpose of the newsletter, to shine light on the people, the ministries, and the faith and works of our church. That is, as the subtitle reads, the heart of MLUMC.

The Window also refers to our tradition. Featured in the newsletter's nameplate is the Resurrection Window, located in Sanner Chapel. It was dedicated in 1964 and refurbished in 2011. The people of this church cherished the Resurrection Window and continue to do so.

Why cherish a window? One reason is because it is a symbol of our Christian tradition. The Resurrection Window in our nameplate shows that we are part of Christ's church, founded upon his teachings, his life, his death and resurrection.

Wishing you a good read - and a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas.



Brookline Parlor
9:30 - 10:30 AM
during the
Sunday School Hour
Opening November 29

Salt and Light Matthew 5:13-16

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:16 (NRSV)

Whenever I read this passage of Scripture, my mind is immediately filled with memories from Vacation Bible Schools past. I can see the faces of children, many of them now grown to adulthood, singing that old Sunday School song – *"This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!"* In my experience, young children have always liked the second verse of that old song the best – *"Hide it under a bushel . . . NO! I'm gonna let it shine!"* With gusto they would always shout that word "NO" at the suggestion of hiding it under a bushel. I'm gonna let it shine! I've loved the way that some of the leaders would then personalize the song by leading the children in singing: *"Shine all over (insert the name of your town here), I'm gonna let it shine!"* We all love that old song, but I have a question for you today – Do we really let it shine? As individual Christians, and as a congregation, how do we let the light of Christ shine through our lives?



This past summer, several of us had the opportunity to tour some United Methodist historic sites with a group that was visiting from our church's partner congregation in the City of Zwickau in eastern Germany. On one beautiful day, we visited Old Otterbein UMC in the City of Baltimore. Located mid-way between Camden Yards ballpark and the Inner Harbor, this was the place where Philip William Otterbein spent the last thirty-nine years of his life and ministry. During his long pastorate there, Otterbein was known for his very direct (some might say "meddling") pastoral style. He was determined to ensure that all of his parishioners actually lived the faith which they professed.

In the spring of 1807, Otterbein was informed that one of his sheep had strayed quite dramatically from the path of the Christian life. This man, by the name of Hoefflich, had left his wife and family in Baltimore while he traveled to a town some miles away for his business. Word soon began to reach the 81 year old no-nonsense preacher that Hoefflich was bringing dishonor to his family and to his faith by his lifestyle away from home. On June 5th of that year, old Otterbein wrote his wayward parishioner a scathing pastoral letter that included these words: *"A man that knows the truth and confesses it fallen so awfully! This we had not expected. We hoped that you would be salt in your neighborhood – a light and a leader. Alas, it is to the contrary."* I continue to be challenged by those words. Be salt in your neighborhood, a light and a leader! Those old words, written by one of our denomination's founders, are good advice for us today. Salt, light, and leaders have one thing in common – when present, they fundamentally change the circumstance into which they have been placed for the better. Your church leadership continues to investigate ways in which we can be salt, light, and leaders in our neighborhood from our very prominent location on the corner of Scott Road and West Liberty Avenue. We hosted a very successful community festival in September, and we are planning more outreach events for the future. Consult the other pages of this newsletter for more information, and help us to shine the Light of Christ throughout our community in the weeks ahead.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Tom
Thomas Q. Strandburg,
Pastor

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Sat. Dec 12: Christmas Cookie Sale & British Tea Room

The UMW will be selling homemade cookies by the pound at this year's Christmas Cookie Sale & British Tea Room, taking place Saturday, Dec. 12 from 9am – noon at the church. Arrive early for a premium selection. Tea and scones will be served in our British tearoom, by our teens from the Dames In Action (DIA) circle. The DIA girls will also be selling raffle tickets for gift baskets, which will be on display.

Help Needed: Cookie Bakers

Consider volunteering to bake a batch of your favorite Christmas cookies to donate to the Cookie Sale. Bring the cookies to the church kitchen on Thurs. Dec. 10 between 9 am and 8 pm or on Fri. Dec. 11 before noon. Include the name of the cookie and a list of ingredients as a courtesy for people with allergies.

For more information, please contact Sandy Waters at 412.833.3702 or bluepen1123@yahoo.com

Thanksgiving Meal Prep & Delivery

Turkeys, drivers and clean-team volunteers are needed for the annual Thanksgiving Day meal to homeless, lonely and homebound community members. We need people to:

- Donate turkeys, dressing, pies or cans of sweet potatoes
- Help deliver Thanksgiving meals.
- Serve as clean-team volunteers (youth can earn community service hours.)

The dine-in portion of the meal will be held at Bethany Lutheran Church on W. Liberty, just down the road from our church. The meal runs from 1 to 5 pm on Thurs., Nov. 26. Delivery of meals will be from our church in Asbury Center, so if you are signing up to deliver meals, report to our church. Clean-team volunteers should report to either MLUMC or Bethany Lutheran for a 2-hour shift, beginning at 10 am, with the last shift reporting at 5 pm.

For information, or to sign up, see the sign-up sheet on the main bulletin board on the first floor of the education wing, or contact Sandy Waters at 412.833.3702 or bluepen1123@yahoo.com or Bonnie Lawson at 412.343.3498 or bonnielawson58@comcast.net. Last year, we fed over 500 people, so your help is greatly appreciated.

Dr. Lily Yuan

45 Years and 135,000 Miles

This fall Dr. Lily Yuan retired from the Chancel Choir after 45 years of faithful service. A valuable member of the alto section with her sweet voice, mental acuity and music-reading ability, she leaves a hole in the section.

Dr. Yuan has an interesting life story, born in Yunnan Province, China. At the age of 9 her family fled to Burma during the Communist invasion. At the age of 12 Lily learned the Queen's English in a Methodist English High School. At the age of 18 she came to the U.S. to earn a B.A. degree at Ohio Wesleyan University and then an M.D. at Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Yuan came to Children's Hospital in 1969, moving to Brookline. She noticed our church driving by. During her first visit she was warmly welcomed by this congregation and was impressed by our choir which she soon joined. In 1972 she joined another Pediatrician whose practice was in the North Hills, so she moved to Allison Park, continuing to commute to Mt. Lebanon UMC twice weekly for choir rehearsals and Sunday morning services, thus logging 135,000+ miles during her 45 years of service in the choir.

Now in retirement from her medical practice and choir, Lily is busy with our Hands and Hearts organization, enjoys the Pittsburgh Symphony concerts, and volunteers as a dog walker at Animal Friends. The Chancel Choir accepted Dr. Lily's resignation with regrets, but we understand her decision to avoid the traffic and bad weather she encounters during her 34-mile journey to MLUMC. She keeps a watchful eye and ear on us from the balcony every Sunday morning.



Dr. Lily Yuan

Three Rivers Ringers Make Heinz Hall Debut

Three Rivers Ringers, Pittsburgh premier handbell ensemble and artists-in-residence at MLUMC, have been invited to participate in the Holiday Pops Series with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and the Mendelssohn Choir. Concerts are Dec 11, 12 and 19 at 8 pm and Dec 12, 13, 19 and 20 at 2:30 pm. For more information, visit the website at: <http://www.pittsburghsymphony.org/production/43997/-highmark-holiday-pops>. Tickets may be purchased by calling 412-392-4900.

Weekday Ministries

by Mettelise Ziegler, WDM Director

Our "Happy Holiday" Season

While carnal parents regard only the worldly prosperity of their children, truly religious parents are chiefly concerned about the eternal salvation of their souls. (53)

Who would say such a harsh thing this time of the year? At Weekday Ministries, our hard working parents long for Christmas so they can have a break from their jobs, shopping, decorating, and the constant demands of cleaning, educating and feeding their children.

Christmas day is the worst in the whole year on which to preach Christ; at least to me. (239)

Ouch. Now that really hurts. Everyone is just "going with the flow of traffic" when it comes to the season. No one is trying to ignore Christ, but society seems to demand a well-planned approach to Christmas. Everyone will be disappointed if there are no gifts, cookies or decorations. Why, even the church gets into the act with bazaars, parties and gift exchanges.

Lord, keep me... from preaching empty stuff to please the ear, instead of changing the heart!

Hey, God understands that society expects certain things from us. We have to keep up!

Take with you your hearts, full of fresh spring water from heaven, and preach Christ crucified and the resurrection and that will conquer the world.

What is this man trying to say? Clearly, the writer of the quotations above would submit that readiness for Christmas involves preparing the heart for the birth of the Christ Child.

At Weekday Ministries, we use the season of Advent to teach basic lessons about God. We will be using an Advent wreath to countdown days, reading daily devotions and praying. We will be playing with nativity scenes, enacting the events of Christmas over and over again. We will be watching inspiring videos, and learning new songs that honor God. Although our families will be participating in a fundraiser through Cibrone's Bakery selling hoagies and pizzas and planning a special breakfast for our staff, they will be encouraged to read the Gospel of John that is being sent home as a gift.

We will be praying at our WDM Board meeting on November 12th at 6:00 PM. We will be asking God to bless and lead our staff, families, parishioners and pastor as they work together to create a holy environment for the children in our care.

The author of the quotations above was a man who embraced what people often forget this time of the year. His entire adult life was spent traveling thousands of miles enduring hardships most of us would find intolerable. It was investment in the only thing that could create authentic joy. He preached that faith in the Child of Christmas was a gift offered to everyone and was the only way to reconciliation with the Father. At Weekday Ministries, it is our express purpose to attain the exact same blessings that Francis Asbury, father of American Methodism, so plainly, yet eloquently preached.

On behalf of our Weekday families and staff, I thank you for your continued support and prayers. I also ask God for you to cling to Christ with joy throughout the "happy holidays" season!

Mettelise Ziegler

Darius L. Salter, *America's Bishop: The Life of Francis Asbury*. Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 2003

Help Needed for Advent

Volunteers are needed to help with lighting candles each Sunday during Advent, and to assist with the Nativity Tableaux on Sunday, Dec. 20. If you would like to light a candle, are willing to be in the Tableaux

or help behind the scenes with organizing costumes, contact Kim Rhoton, krhoton@mlumc.org.



Mission Projects

You can support MLUMC's Mission efforts with your prayer, time and gifts. Many mission activities are conducted by Sunday School classes, the UMW and our Youth Group. Consider which of the activities below fit into your prayer or physical life and commit.

Local Initiatives

North Side Reading: Tuesdays, participants depart the church parking lot at 9:30 am to read, one-on-one, with Manchester Elementary School students. After two, 25 minute sessions, the participants are back at the church by 11:30. Contact Clark Remington at 412/831-1460.

North Side Lunch program: Dedicated church members prepare and serve a hot meal to homeless and hungry people, monthly. Contact Bishop Bashore at 412/854-2389.

Family Promise: Drive, provide a meal or spend time at MLUMC hosting our guests who spend 7 consecutive evenings and over-nights at our church building, 5 times a year. Contact Mike Naragon at 412/563-1499.

Non-Local Initiatives:

Haiti: A mission trip is planned for March 19-26, 2016. Contact Clark Remington at 412/831-1460. Work planned:

- educational interaction with teachers and children
- light maintenance tasks
- building and installing Bio-Sand filters for homes
- community research may also take place

Zwickau/Kazla Ruda/MLUMC partnership: Our sister church in Zwickau, Germany is ministering to refugees fleeing hardship and strife, mostly from Syria. Proceeds from Cat's Meow image sales, the rummage sale and donations are being sent with Mary Garber in December. Contact Louanne Baily at 412/571-1784.

The Nyadire Connection: Mission opportunities exist with this Methodist Zimbabwe relationship. Work trips occur on a regular basis throughout the year: plan now for summer of 2016. Contact MaryBeth Zollars through www.nyadire.org or at email address info@nyadire.org.

Support for the Apportionment Fund

Each year, the Western Pennsylvania Conference asks our church to contribute funds, called an apportionment, to support local, national, and world mission projects as well as our conference camps, medical benefits for retired pastors and a host of other worthwhile causes. During this holiday season, consider making a Christmas Memorial donation to the Apportionment Fund. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Poinsettia, Food Pantry and Apportionment Fund Christmas Memorials

Make a donation to the Food Pantry, the Apportionment Fund or purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of friends or loved ones. The red poinsettias cost \$12 and will be on display Sun. Dec. 20 and Christmas Eve. You may pick up your plant after the 11 pm service on Christmas Eve or after Christmas. Then, spread the cheer by volunteering to deliver the poinsettia to a shut-in, or ask the church to deliver. **The deadline for ordering flowers is Sun., December 6.**

Christmas Memorials 2015 Order Deadline Sunday, Dec. 6.



Make check payable to MLUMC. Mark the memo line *Poinsettia, Food Pantry or Apportionment.*

MLUMC Food Pantry \$ _____ Apportionment \$ _____
Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of :

Number of poinsettias _____ @ \$12 each = _____ Given in (circle) "memory" or "honor" of:

☐ I will pick up ☐ I will deliver to a shut-in ☐ Church to deliver to a shut-in

Donor Name _____ Phone _____

November 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
15 8:30 AM Worship-Sanner 9:00 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 5 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM Eagle Reviews	16 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal	17 6 PM Tentle Tots 7 PM BSA #23	18 9 AM Kitchen Cleaning 7 PM Cub Scout 7 PM Christian Ed 7 PM Koronia UMW Circle	19 9:30 AM UMW Faith Circle 12 PM UMW Rebecca 6:30 PM Promise Bells 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	20 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study	21 10 AM Food Pantry
22 8:30 AM Worship-Sanner 9:00 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 4 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group 7 PM BSA Leaders	23 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal	24 6 PM Tentle Tots 7 PM BSA #23 7 PM BSA Reviews	25 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	26 THANKSGIVING OFFICE CLOSED	27 OFFICE CLOSED 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Cub Scouts Bear Den 7 PM Circle of Friends	28
29 8:30 AM Worship-Sanner 9:00 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 4 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group	30 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal	1	2	3	4	5

Special Events

Thurs. Nov. 26 *Thanksgiving Meal Preps and Delivery* - 1 to 5 pm Asbury Center

Wed. Dec. 9 *Lessons & Carols with Allegheny Co. Jail Inmates* - 5:30 pm jail lobby

Sat. Dec. 12 *Christmas Cookie Sale & British Tea Room* - 9 am Wesley Hall and Asbury Ctr.

Sun. Dec. 13 *Teddy Bear Sunday* - both services, teddy bear & stuffed animal donations for children's charities.

Sun. Dec. 13 *Lessons & Carols* - MLUMC & St. Bernard's Choir 4 PM St. Bernard's

Sun. Dec. 20 *Nativity Scene Tableaux with Lessons & Carols*, music for Chancel Choir harp, violin and cello 10:45 service

Sun. Dec. 20 *Dinner & Christmas Caroling* - 5 pm Asbury Center and the neighborhood

Thurs. Dec. 24 *Christmas Eve Candlelight Services*

Service for Children & Families (with wiggle room) 5 pm

Traditional Christmas Eve Services with Chancel Choir, harp, violin & cello 8 & 11 pm

Childcare provided at 8 pm service

Sun. Dec. 27 *Unity Service with Communion*
10 am Sanctuary

December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 8:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 4 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group	30	1 6 PM Terrific Tues 7 PM BSA #23 7 PM BSA Parents	2 6:30 AM N. Side Lunch Prep 6 PM Homebuilders' Picnic	3 8:30 AM N Side Lunch Prep 9:30 AM Hands & Heart Noon TNT Asbury Hights 6:30 PM Promise Bells 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	4 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study	5 8 M UMW Soup 10 AM Food Pantry
6 8:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 4 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Youth Group	7 6:30 Cub Scouts 7 PM Chapel Bells 7 PM Charge Conference 7:30 PM UM Foundation Board 8:30 Church Council	8 6 PM Terrific Tues 7 PM BSA #23 7 PM BSA Reviews 7 PM Cub Scout Planning	9 5:30 PM Lessons & Carols @ AC Jail 6:30 PM Wolf Cub Scout 7 PM Education 7:30 Finance	10 6:30 PM Promise Bells 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	11 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study 1:30 PM Memoirs Group 6:30 Cub Scouts Bear Den	12 9 AM UMW Cookie Bazaar
13 <i>Teddy Bear & New Member Sunday</i> 8:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Sanctuary 4 PM Lessons & Carols @ St. Bernard's 5 PM Youth Group	14 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal	15 6 PM Terrific Tues 7 PM BSA #23	16 7 PM Cub Scout 7 PM Christian Ed 7 PM Koinonia UMW Circle	17 9:30 AM UMW Faith Circle 6:30 PM Promise Bells 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	18 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study	19 10 AM Food Pantry
20 8:30 AM Worship Sanner 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship & Tableaux - Sanctuary 4 PM Youth Choir 5 PM Christmas Carling 6:30 PM Eagle Reviews	21 7 PM Chapel Bells Rehearsal	22 7 PM BSA Reviews 7 PM BSA #23	23 6:30 PM Cub Scouts	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Services: 5 PM for Children & Families 8 PM & 11 PM Traditional Office Closed	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS Office Closed	26
27 10 AM One Service Sanctuary 6 PM Kerygma East End Shelter Dinner	28	29 7 PM BSA #23	30	31	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR Office Closed	2

Hosting Family Promise Sun. Dec. 27 through Sun. Jan. 3

Save the Date

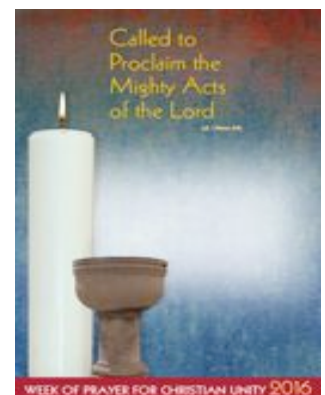
Service of Prayer for Christian Unity

Wednesday, January 20, 2016 7 pm

Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

Worship with our friends from Christian churches of Mt. Lebanon and Dormont, celebrating the relationship between baptism and proclamation.

"Called to Proclaim the Mighty Acts of the Lord"



Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church

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MLUMC'S Wholistic Health Outreach Ministry on Holiday Stress

"One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up." Luke 18:1 NLT

Are you overbooked for this month? Do you look at your schedule and panic? How can you possibly do everything - meetings, birthdays, gifts, decorating, parties and too many other things, not including work, family and church.

It's time to trim your list instead of the tree. Consider fewer gifts, fewer decorations and not so many parties. Find quiet time to spend with devotional materials and in prayer. The only way to get to the heart of Christmas is with Jesus. All of the other things are fine, but not necessary. Practice some stress busting techniques.

- **Leave.** If the noise level is too much or the crowds are closing in, just leave. You don't have to stay in the toy store with all of the screaming youngsters, or converse with the know-it-all at the party. Walk away.
- **Close your eyes and get re-centered.** Take a break from the lights and activities.
- **Try solitude.** In the middle of so much activity, take time alone to set priorities, to pray, or to count your blessings.
- **Go outside.** Fresh air and sunshine can make a difference in how you feel. Being in God's creation and going for a walk can help find extra energy.
- **Locate some water.** Listen to it, watch it, drink it or sit in it. Water refreshes in so many ways. He knows what we need; maybe that is why God put so much on earth.
- **Breathe!** Remember to exhale occasionally. When the shoulders are up to the ears, it's time to take some deep breaths. Fill the lungs completely from the bottom to the top. Pause for a couple of seconds. Exhale letting all of the air out of the lungs from the top to the bottom. Repeat three or four times.
- **Listen to music.** Choose whatever type makes you happy. Sing along.

Give yourself the gift of peace in the midst of a world in chaos. Have a great holiday and share your peace with those around you. (Source: www.mayoclinic.com)