

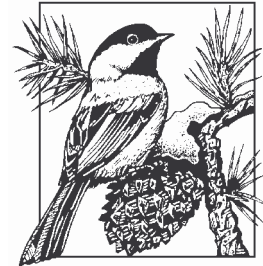
SPECTRUM

NEW COVENANT METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
P.O. Box 2262, Columbia, MD 21045 (410) 370.9663
www.newcovenantmcc.org

Pastor's Ponderings: **Epiphany Gratitude!**

EPIPHANIA - MANIFESTATION, REVELATION

The day of Epiphany (January 6) and the season of "Ordinary Time" that follows in our church calendar, is an occasion for us to reflect upon how Jesus manifested, or revealed, God's power and grace to the world. Through the readings for our Sunday worship services, we recall Christ's early ministry – from his baptism and the miracle at the wedding at Cana to the teaching of the Beatitudes. In these moments, we see that the infant Jesus of our Christmas celebrations has become the human in whom the people begin to recognize the very presence of God. Reading our contemporary world through these "Epiphany" stories, we see also how God continues to be made manifest in the Body of Christ today. The Christian community serves as Jesus' ongoing Epiphany.



I have certainly witnessed an epiphany, a revelation, of Christ's love recently – in and through and among the Body of Christ that is New Covenant MCC. During our Advent and Christmas celebrations, YOU bore beautiful witness to the presence of God through your hospitality, compassion, and service. As we embark upon this Epiphany season, then, I would like to share with you my personal gratitude for the many of you who went above and beyond the call of duty during our Advent-Christmas-Epiphany observances. The following people recently served as epiphanies – manifestations – of the love of God in Christ Jesus!

- Thank you to our "Cookie-Jar Crew"! Thanks to their great work, we made a profit of over \$733 from our Cookie-Jar Fundraiser. The money will be split evenly between our "Outreach (Social Action)" Fund and our MCC Conferences Fund. This effort will thus enable us to live more fully into our mission to manifest Christ's love in the world. Thanks to all you salespeople and jar assemblers for your hard work. And special thanks go to Bob A. for organizing this important fundraiser once again, and to Bob and Wil C. for hosting the assembly party and donating the needed supplies.

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New Covenant MCC Vision Statement

Creating Community

Inspiring Spiritual Growth

Transforming the World Through The Love of Christ





- **If you are worshipping with us for the first time**, we are especially glad that you are here! Please don't leave without visiting our information table in the narthex and picking up useful information about our community's life, ministry, and activities. We would love for you to fill out a **"Let's Get Acquainted Form"** and place it in the offering basket as your contribution to us this evening.
- **If you would like to become a designated "Friend"** of New Covenant MCC and receive a permanent name tag each week, please complete a green "Friend's Registration" form from the information table.
- **All guests, members, friends – please take a moment to sign the Friendship Pad** in the atrium to record your attendance. This helps us keep track of our attendance records and gives you the opportunity to indicate your interest in any of the community events that are announced.
- **Offering Envelopes** are available on the information table. If you would like us to keep a record of your giving for your tax purpose, please legibly print your name and address on the envelope. Please see an usher, host, or the pastor for any additional information about our community. Let us worship God!

Remember to recycle this Spectrum newsletter... and all recyclable household products! If you don't recycle (which you should!!!), please don't throw this newsletter away. Bring it to Pastor Lance or David when you are done with it, and they will recycle it for you. Together, we can conserve our precious natural resources and reduce the amount of unnecessary energy used, thus fulfilling our God-given call to be good stewards of the creation.

KNOW SOMEONE LOOKING *for a Church* COMMUNITY?

Think about it. How many times do we hear folks talking about being raised in the Christian church and having left? Know someone in your life who might enjoy a visit to Worship on Sunday? Invite them to come along some weekend. There are actually folks out there who are waiting for an invitation to come and see – why not be the one to welcome them home? Let folks know about the good things that are happening at New Covenant!

(continued from page 1)

- Thank you to the members of our Congregational Care Team for organizing our Christmas Card outreach. Special thanks go to Chris L. for spearheading the outreach, Beth C. for providing hosting and training for the card-making team, and to all the people who gave of their time and creativity for that effort. Because of this team's work, every person on our mailing list received a homemade card, and our members who live overseas or who have recently moved received a special mailing. I continually hear about how meaningful our card outreach efforts are – an epiphany of God's care, indeed!
- Thank you to Stacy R., Annette D., Chris L., and Marian L. for putting up our brand new, beautiful church road sign in time for Christmas. Special thanks go to Stacy for having an additional banner made to advertise our Christmas Eve worship, which in fact drew two passers-by and their infant son into our worship! This important (and graphically fantastic) effort is a light to the world that proclaims, "ALL ARE WELCOME to join the Christian community gathered every Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at 14301 Laurel Bowie Road!"
- Thank you to Annette D. and David M. for setting up the nativity scene and altar for our Christmas Eve worship. By giving careful attention to our visual art and environment, they helped to draw our community's focus to the Christ around whom we gather and for whose service we live. Their work truly manifested the presence of the Incarnate One.
- Thank you to our Congregational Care Team for organizing our succulent Christmas Eve Luncheon, and thanks to the dozens of people who contributed delicious culinary treats. We attracted lots of hungry folks, with over 35 people staying for the feast after worship. Our luncheon served as an epiphany of Christ's hospitality, as several first-time guests (including people from other countries and cultures, as well as members of Oaklands Presbyterian who showed up by mistake!) attended. These guests, who had just worshiped for the first time in a predominantly gay and lesbian Christian context, were given an unqualified welcome at our community's table! Special thanks go to Chris L. for his organizational efforts and Linda S. for heading up the clean-up crew.
- My wonderful partner David receives another work of thanks – this time for all his fabulous cooking, fastidious cleaning, and first-rate hosting for this year's Epiphany party. Though it is deceptively called "The Pastor's Epiphany Party," David does far more than half of the work for these annual celebrations. His generous efforts this year helped us live into our mission to "create community" and illumined God's own generosity – the gift which makes up the center of our congregation's life.

These are just some of the community members whose organizational efforts and work deserve special gratitude this season. Each one of you who contributes your presence, prayers, and resources for God's work through New Covenant is also deserving of my heartfelt thanks. Keep shining, folks! God has given us many signs recently that our labor is not in vain – in fact, our work is giving birth to Christ's love in the world!

What a joy it is to participate with YOU – the Body of Christ – in Jesus' ongoing Epiphany in the world! I am grateful beyond words to be on this journey with you.

In the Spirit,
Pastor Lance

Exploring an Epiphany Existence ~ Worship from 7 January – 18 February

The stretch of Ordinary Time between Epiphany and the beginning of Lent is often known informally as the “Epiphany Season,” because its readings and themes center around the Epiphany, or revelation, of God in Jesus. The scripture readings for the Sundays after Epiphany focus on how Jesus manifested God’s power and presence throughout the early part of his ministry. During our worship this season, we will be considering the theme ***Epiphany: breaching the barriers***. Throughout this season of revelation, Jesus is revealed as repeatedly stepping beyond the accepted tribal barriers – whether his family or his socioeconomic class or his religion or nation. One simply cannot ignore the evidence that Jesus was consistently breaking down walls that divided people. As we explore this season’s readings, we will reflect upon how Jesus would deal with similar walls in our own time.

Be sure to make the worship of God a priority this Epiphany season. Join your community of faith and family of choice at New Covenant, as we explore what it means to breach barriers with Jesus and live an Epiphany Existence!



We are looking for one (or two!) passionate person(s)!

An important ministry opportunity for Social Transformation!

We have been invited to partner with MCC of Northern Virginia in a collaborative venture for fellowship *and* for social justice! What they have in mind is a dance sometime in the first quarter of this year that would be both a social event and social-justice-fundraiser. The party/dance would serve to create broader community within our Fellowship. The funds raised would go to an immediate broader MCC ministry need... such as our denomination’s important initiative to protect the extremely oppressed GLBT community in Eastern Europe.

So.. if you love to plan parties (you know you do!) and/or you are interested in serving the life-and-death needs of oppressed people in the world, then this is definitely the project for you! Volunteers from our congregation would join a committee from 3-4 local MCCs in planning the event. Please give serious thought to this opportunity! See Pastor Lance or any member of the Board of Directors a.s.a.p. to find out more or to express interest!



Do you serve as a liturgical minister in our community's worship?

Have you ever thought about serving as a liturgical minister?

Do you want to know what liturgical ministry is?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, then we have an opportunity for you...

Come to our Liturgical Ministry Team's Organizational Meeting

We are having a special organizational meeting for our Liturgical Ministry Team. All who serve, or wish to serve, as Announcements Readers, Lectors (scripture readers), Assisting Ministers, Ministers of Stewardship, and Eucharistic Ministers are strongly encouraged to attend. We will be creating our upcoming worship schedule and discussing opportunities for training. We will have heavy snacks available, so you won't have to go to worship hungry afterwards!

Contact: Pastor Lance for more information.
PLEASE SIGN-UP using the sheet in the Narthex.

Date/Time: Sunday, 14 January, 4:45 – 5:45 p.m.

Location: here at Oaklands, in classrooms 5 & 6

Mark your calendars! Mark your calendars!

**There will be a special Community Forum,
Sunday, 21 January, after worship!**

We won't be hanging out and eating goodies in the narthex after church on the 21st. Instead, we'll go down the hallway where we'll hang out and eat goodies! There, we'll also listen to a report from our Lay Delegate, Annette D., concerning last November's Regional Conference. Sound boring? It won't be! There is lots of exciting information to share, and attending this forum will give you a larger perspective of our denomination!

And... we will have a special, world famous, high-profile guest joining us for the forum to share information concerning an important MCC initiative. We'll give you a hint who it is... she's won Wimbledon... a bunch!

Plan to stay for this exciting, 15 – 20 minute forum after worship on the 21st!

Important Opportunity for Equality ~ New Covenant participates in Equality Maryland's LOBBY DAY!

Equality Maryland's Lobby Day 2007

Monday, 12 February, 2007, 4 pm – 8 pm.

Annapolis

More information can be found at
Equality Maryland's website: www.equalitymaryland.org
See Pastor Lance if you are interested or would like more information.

Our partners in equality at PFLAG
are hosting an opportunity to help you prepare for Lobby Day ~

PFLAG Preparation Workshop for Lobby Day

Tuesday, 9 January, 7:30 pm

Owen Brown Interfaith Center

7246 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD, 21045

Everyone is invited. The meeting is FREE.

People who want to learn more about Lobby Day 2007 should attend.

(Directions and details available on website: www.pflagmd.org)



Have you heard about a change in the US Tax Code in 2007?

Contributions to church and charity will require a paper trail (receipt, cancelled check, etc.) for all monetary donations regardless of the amount. Cash in the collection plate won't be deductible if you itemize your return.



Holy Communion

If you are unable to attend a Sunday worship service due to illness or incapacity, please call Rev. Lance at 410.370.9663. He will bring Holy Communion to you the following Tuesday (or an appointment will be made for a time that is more convenient for you.)

January 2007

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 7 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm Worship! The Baptism of Christ | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 4:45 pm Liturgical Ministry Team Meeting 6:30 pm Worship! The Second Sunday in Ordinary Time | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm Worship! The Third Sunday in Ordinary Time <u>After Worship:</u> Community Forum led by our Lay Delegate! | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm Worship! The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time | 29 | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 6:30 pm Worship! The Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Stewardship Update and Comparison Report

December 2006

Average Weekly Attendance: 33
 Offering: \$7,786.55
 Fundraising: \$733.00
Total: \$8,519.55

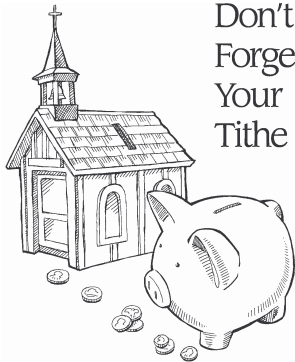
Our monthly expenses total \$4,348.73. That means that last month we collected \$3,437.82 more than our approved expenses. Thank you for your commitment. Our congregation is built upon your faithful generosity!

November 2006

Average Weekly Attendance: 28
 Offering: \$3,788.00
 Fundraising: \$0.00
Total: \$3,788.00

December 2005

Average Weekly Attendance: 24
 Offering: \$3,346.22
 Fundraising: \$462.00
Total: \$3,808.22



Don't
Forget
Your
Tithe

New Covenant MCC Ministry Directory

Board of Directors

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------|
| Moderator | Rev. Lance Mullins (revlancem@yahoo.com) | 410.370.9663 |
| Vice Moderator | Debbie D. | |
| Treasurer | David K. | |
| Clerk | Stacy R. | |
| Member at Large | OPEN | |

Team Leaders

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Art & Environment | Annette D. |
| Minister of Music | Greg Satorie |
| Coordinator of Worship | Jamison M. |
| Congregational Care Team | Bob A. Chris L. |
| Spectrum | Joshua Alexander |
| Coordinator of Internet Outreach | Joshua Alexander |
| Coordinator of Christian Education | OPEN |

**Receive the electronic version of Spectrum and important announcements through our Internet Discussion group on Yahoo Groups at: NewCovenantMCC-subscribe@yahoogroups.com