

SPECTRUM

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

Pastor's Ponderings...

Christmas Gratitude!

I am typing this newsletter article on December 29th, the mid-point of the Christmas celebration. Yes, you read that correctly! December 29th is indeed the mid-point of the Christmas celebration. That's because, as many of you may know, Christmas isn't a day in the Church calendar – it's a whole season. And this season doesn't culminate on December 25th, it actually *begins* on that day. Christmas is a full twelve days, stretching all the way to the day of Epiphany on January 6th. And I, for one, am celebrating Christmas every one of those twelve days!



My twelve-day-long Christmas celebration does not, however, involve opening a gift each of those days. (Not that I would be opposed to that! ☺) Instead, my Christmas celebration involves expressing gratitude throughout this entire season. My goal is to formally express thanks to at least one person on each of the twelve days of Christmas. And today, I've decided to use this newsletter article to give thanks for a whole lot of people – those members of our community who went way beyond the call of duty to make our Advent and Christmas observances particularly noteworthy. Thanks be to God for the following folks, who bore beautiful witness to the presence of God through your hospitality, compassion, and service.

Advent Angels

This year, our community held weekly prayer services during the season of Advent. For three Tuesdays, we gathered together to affirm our faith in God and to give voice to our yearning for God's peace, renewal, and healing. Each of these services was followed by a simple meal, during which we were able to continue our communion with one another. Though these services did not draw a large crowd, they proved to be deeply moving and worthwhile for those who participated. The following two angels deserve many thanks:

- ☼ Greg Satorie, our Minister of Music, for generously serving as the musical accompanist for these services, and
- ☼ David M., for leading the assembly's song and for helping me to prepare the meals.

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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!

Shopping to do?

Now you can SHOP on-line and support New Covenant at the same time! Visit www.iGive.com!

Do you know that many of your favorite shopping spots are partnered with iGive? Have travel plans this holiday season? Travelocity and Orbitz are both iGive partners. You can support the ministry of New Covenant by going through iGive.com!

Go to www.igive.com, register New Covenant MCC as your charity and shop away! It's that easy to give a bit of additional support to our congregation!

What about internet searching?

You can also SEARCH on-line and support New Covenant at the same time! Visit www.GoodSearch.com!

What if New Covenant earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Well, now it can!

GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up!

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter New Covenant Metropolitan Community Church as the charity you want to support. And, be sure to spread the word!

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Christmas Caregivers

This Christmas, our community once again went the “extra mile” in order to express care for folks both inside and outside of our community. I give thanks for the powerful witness to Christ’s Love embodied by the following people:

- ☀ Bob A. and Beth C., who orchestrated this year’s Christmas Card ministry on behalf of the Congregational Care Team. Because of the work of these two people, every person on our mailing list once again received a homemade card from our church! This year’s cards included our congregation’s logo, and they looked particularly fabulous. I continually hear how meaningful our card outreach efforts are, and I know that these expressions of care can be a life-line of hope for people who are struggling at this time of year.
- ☀ Debbie D., for organizing our Christmas Gift-Card Collection for those in need! Debbie, who along with Penny S. serves as our congregation’s liaison to the Laurel Advocacy Referral Service (LARS), came up with this idea and saw it through to completion! Her expressions of encouragement via Sunday announcements and our e-mail lists really “rallied the troops” and inspired us to contribute! On our congregation’s behalf, she delivered \$700 worth of gift cards for groceries and household supplies to LARS. Thanks be to God for her – and for all of you who contributed to our neighbors in need!
- ☀ Annette D., David M., Stacy R., and Greg Satorie, who took the good news of Christmas into the hospitals and hospices of Baltimore. On December 22nd, these four folks from our congregation’s music ensemble, along with another singer from Positive Voices, went caroling at two hospitals and one hospice, where they ministered to those who are suffering with AIDS. They took time out of the Christmas “rush” to *live* our Christmas faith, and they shared with me how deeply powerful the experience was for them and for the “last and the least” whom they went to serve. This is the second year they have organized and participated in this Christmas ministry, and I am personally awed by their witness to the Gospel. Special thanks go to Stacy, who was the “driving force” behind our ensemble’s participation, and to Greg, who coordinated with the staff of the hospitals and hospice.
- ☀ Annette D. and David M., who, for the fifth year in a row, prepared the nativity scene and altar for our Christmas 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 whom we live. Their care always manifests the presence of the Incarnate One.
- ☀ Adam B., who did an excellent job serving as the lead host for our Christmas Day worship. This service brought its unique “challenges” for the host! Adam had to not only help with the transition from our social to our worship, but he also had to help clean up the narthex in a hurry so that another “renter” congregation could hold their Christmas service immediately after ours. Adam handled all of these challenges with care and grace!
- ☀ Chris L., who, on behalf of the Congregational Care Team, organized our succulent Christmas Day social. This year’s social was warm, intimate, and celebratory, and it was a special treat to have the seven members of Chuck I.’s family as our guests at the event. The social truly set the stage for our Christmas worship! Thanks go not only to Chris, but also to the many people who contributed delicious culinary treats and helped out with the effort!
- ☀ Luke, Peter, and James – Chuck I.’s fabulous nephews who were visiting from out of town. Though these young men were our guests, they helped lead worship on Christmas Day by participating in the procession and placement of our nativity scene! Thanks also go to Chuck for organizing their participation!

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Epiphany Entertainer

- And, finally, I am delighted to thank my partner David for once again co-hosting our annual Epiphany party. The fiesta hasn't even happened yet, but, by the time you read this, many of you will have experienced his fabulous cooking, fastidious cleaning, and first-rate hosting first-hand. Though it is deceptively called "The Pastor's Epiphany Party," David does far more than half of the work for these annual celebrations. And this year, he is also the "liaison" for our Epiphany collection, which is going to support the people of Darfur through Lancaster Theological Seminary's Tents of Hope project. David's multi-faceted work on behalf of our community continually manifests God's own generosity, and I am forever grateful for his boundless love and support.



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! For we know 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 in living our vision this and every season of our lives!

In the Spirit,
Pastor Lance



New Covenant's Children's Church

January 13th, 2007

On the second Sunday of each month, we host a "Children's Church" that takes place in the nursery during our worship service. During this time, our Children's Ministry leaders lead our kids in games, crafts, and Bible lessons.

On January 13th, during the Passing of the Peace, our children are invited to go down the hall for Children's Church with our instructors, Patrick and Tom!

To support this ministry, contact Patrick H. or Tom M..



Annual Shrove Tuesday Celebration!

A Decadent Potluck and a Meaningful Worship Experience
 all in the same evening!
Tuesday, 5 February, 6:45 p.m.

“Shrove Tuesday” and “Fat Tuesday” may not be terms we’re all familiar with, but we’ve surely all heard of *Mardi Gras*! All of these names refer to the same day – the Tuesday that precedes Ash Wednesday in the Western church calendar. And this year, we have a great opportunity to celebrate this day as a community (though, let me assure you, our celebration will be much tamer than *Mardi Gras* in New Orleans!)

Ash Wednesday is the day that begins the season of Lent in our church calendar. As a season of penitence, Lent has long been associated with periods of fasting or simplifying one’s life in an effort to promote spiritual renewal. The Tuesday before Ash Wednesday has customarily been a time for feasting and celebrating before the Lenten fast begins. The name “Shrove Tuesday” comes from the custom of being “shriven” (going to confession and being granted absolution by a priest) in preparation for the season of Lent. It is called “Fat Tuesday” (or *Mardi Gras* in French) because of the old Roman Catholic practice of using up all the remaining fat in one’s kitchen prior to the time of fasting.

This year, we will celebrate this day together and bring our “fatty” culinary creations to share! We are having a community potluck at the home of Chuck I. and Chris L. in honor of this day. The social will conclude with a brief service of prayer and reflection for the observance of Ash Wednesday. We will distribute blessed ashes for those who desire to observe Ash Wednesday with the traditional custom of marking an ashen cross on their foreheads.

Save the date, and join us for this festive and meaningful celebration that serves as New Covenant’s threshold to the season of Lent. Sign up sheets will be available for the potluck. *If you are coming directly from work and are unable to bring a dish for the potluck, please join us anyway. There will be plenty of food to share!*

Date/Time: Tuesday, 5 February
 Potluck begins at 6:45... come when you’re able!

Location: Chuck I.’s and Chris L.’s home
directions will be forthcoming

Contact: Patty G.

Domestic and Sexual Violence Seminar

***Hosted by the New Covenant Metropolitan Community Church.
for congregational leaders, domestic/sexual abuse survivors, and
all people of faith who seek to be a healing resource for survivors of abuse.***

***January 26, 2008 11:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.
with an optional Prayer Service for Healing following the seminar***

***Oaklands Presbyterian Church
14301 Laurel Bowie Road (MD 197)
Laurel, MD 20708***

This seminar offers important information about issues related to domestic violence and sexual abuse. Area experts from local support agencies will offer detailed information about the services available in our area for victims of abuse and their families and friends. Specific information will be given concerning the unique dynamics involved for gay or lesbian spouses who have experienced domestic violence. The day will offer invaluable information that will raise our awareness and increase our capacities to care for ourselves and others – whether we are survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse or concerned people of faith who seek to be a healing resource for others.

Speakers will include:

- ☀ Marie Lilly from Turnaround in Baltimore (sexual abuse)
- ☀ participation from YWCA of Arnold (domestic violence)
- ☀ Cheryl Tyesca from the States Attorney Office
- ☀ Printed information from Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence.

The seminar will begin at exactly 11:00 a.m.; Sign-in is at 10:30 a.m .

Advanced registration is strongly encouraged. Pick up a registration flyer from our information table at Oaklands, or contact Pastor Lance Mullins at:

410.370.9663 or RevLanceM@yahoo.com.

Advanced Registration is \$10.00

Registration at the door is \$15.00

The registration fee includes a light lunch and coffee

Following the seminar, we will offer a brief prayer service, which will include the Rite of Anointing with oil for healing and wholeness. All who desire are invited to participate.

Spread the word to your friends, God does not punish anyone who has been abused. As Jesus opened his arms to the afflicted he opens them to you amid your fears in an effort to erase them.

Volunteers are encouraged to contact Diane K., event coordinator. All volunteers must be affirmed by our Pastor.

New Covenant Calendar (January 5 – February 3)

Saturday, January 5:

5:00 pm Pastor's Epiphany Party
(at David's and Lance's home in Pikesville)

Sunday, January 6:

5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
6:30 pm Worship
The Epiphany of the Lord

Sunday, January 13:

6:30 pm Worship
The Baptism of the Lord
6:30 pm Children's Church during worship

Tuesday, January 15:

7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, January 20:

5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
6:30 pm Worship
The Second Sunday of Ordinary Time

Saturday, January 26:

11:00 am Domestic Violence/Abuse Seminar
with an optional prayer service for healing
following the seminar

Sunday, January 27:

4:00 pm Ministries Council Meeting
5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
6:30 pm Worship
The Third Sunday of Ordinary Time
Recognition and Blessing of Board Members

Sunday, February 3:

6:30 pm Worship
The Transfiguration of the Lord

2008 Board of Directors Schedule

Beginning this month, our Board of Directors meetings will be held on the third Tuesday of each month. All are welcome to attend!

And... on January 27th, we will be having a special recognition of Board members in our worship service. Join us as we give thanks for the service of outgoing member Stacy R. and as we bless the 2008 Board, which includes new member Chuck I.

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.

Stewardship Update and Comparison Report

November 2007

Average Weekly Attendance: 31
General Offering: \$4,689.20
Fundraising: \$0.00
Total: \$4,689.20

October 2007

Average Weekly Attendance: 31
General Offering: \$3,901.85
Fundraising: \$0.00
Total: \$3,901.85

November 2006

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

Our monthly expenses total **\$4,371.07**. That means that last month we collected **\$318.13 *more*** than our approved expenses. Thank you for your abundant generosity and commitment to Christ. Our congregation's mission is sustained by your generous support!



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	Patty G.	
Treasurer	David K.	
Clerk	Stacy R.	
Member at Large	Jamison M.	

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	
Coordinators of Internet Outreach	Tim C. Joshua Alexander	
Coordinator of Hosting and Ushering	Marsha M.	
Children's Education Coordinators	Tom M. Patrick H.	