
Spectrum

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

Pastor's Ponderings...

One Thing I Hope You'll Never Forget

Dearest Members and Friends of New Covenant,

I've always found newsletter articles difficult to write – far more difficult than sermons, professional papers or class outlines. I'm not sure what the root of this difficulty is, exactly. Perhaps it's because I've never quite gotten a handle on what a newsletter article is supposed to *be*. Whatever the reason, every month as I have come upon the *Spectrum* deadline, I've suddenly felt like I – a person who loves writing and whose vocation is oriented largely around *words* – have completely lost the ability to put sentences together. But this article, my friends, takes the cake in the "difficulty department." It is without a doubt the most difficult *Spectrum* entry I've had to write, as it's the very last one I'll be writing as the Pastor of New Covenant. With my final day quickly approaching, I find myself thinking that I might actually miss even this dreaded task! I guess that's because I will miss *you* and everything about my life with you – the faithful, committed, generous and affirming community of faith that you are.

CHURCH
What's missing?
UR (you are)

On June 21st, 2002, this community formally invited me to share with you in mutual ministry by serving as your first called Pastor. It is a deep joy for me to see the incredible transformation that has occurred in this congregation over these past six years.

Simply put, we have become a *church*, not only in name but also in spirit. We have grown from an almost exclusively white, gay, middle-aged male community into a diverse congregation that reflects much more fully the kingdom of God in its racial, cultural, gender, generational and sexual variety. We have grown from a group of loosely-bound spiritual seekers into a deeply united Body of Christ that is rooted in an awareness of God's love and that takes seriously our call to care for one another and for the world around us. We have grown from a collection of people without a common religious identity into a theologically reflective community that claims our traditional faith in a way that's real and relevant and liberating for our unique time and place.

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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 an affiliate member, or "Friend,"** of New Covenant MCC, please see Pastor Lance. He will be happy to talk with you more about becoming a Friend and will provide you with a Friendship Covenant Form to fill out and sign.
- **All guests, Members, and Friends – please take a moment to sign the Attendance Register** 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!



New Covenant Calendar (August 10 – September 7)

Sunday, August 10:

5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
 6:30 pm Worship:
 The Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
 Moment of Remembrance for Roy Taylor during worship
 NO Children's Church during Worship

Sunday, August 17:

5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
 6:30 pm Worship:
 The Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Tuesday, August 19:

7:00 pm Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday, August 24:

2:30 pm Farewell Event for Pastor Lance at the home of Debbie D. and Penny S..
 5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
 6:30 pm Worship:
 The Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
 Lance's last Sunday as Pastor of NCMCC
 The Rite of Membership celebrated during worship!

Sunday, August 31:

5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
 6:30 pm Worship:
 The Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
 The Rev. Emma Chattin preaching!
 Vocational Blessing during Worship – bring a symbol of your work (see pg. 4)

Sunday, September 7:

5:00 pm Music Rehearsal
 6:30 pm Worship:
 The Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
 The Rev. David Smith preaching!



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We have grown as people of faith, overcoming our fears of God, Jesus and the Bible – fears engendered by the misappropriation of the treasures of our tradition by those who would exclude minorities, make war and promote hatred. We have learned to love one another – to boldly speak our truth in love, to be who we are in deep relationship with others who are different from us.

We have developed a joyful, authentic, Christ-centered worship that is both radically Christian and radically inclusive. We have developed our music leadership, growing from a small cadre of volunteer pianists into a committed and talented ensemble, with multiple instruments and vocalists, that is ever expanding its repertoire and its ability to inspire our community's song. This ensemble not only serves our congregation but also participates in music leadership for the broader community – from local PRIDE services to national conferences like the National Black Justice Coalition's Black Church Summit.

We have made connections between our personal faith and the work for social transformation. We have grown from a community that had no social transformation programs to one that is a contributing partner to the Oaklands Food Pantry and that conducts regular collections for those in need – from school-supplies drives to Christmas collections for kids affected by HIV/AIDS.

We have developed a strong lay leadership and infrastructure, with effective, skilled and committed leaders serving on our Board, our Ministries Council, and our three Ministry Teams. We have developed our own website and Myspace page, and we've had wonderful leaders who have maintained and "tweaked" them. We have committed ministers who work behind the scenes to format and publish our monthly Spectrum and our weekly Orders of Worship. We started a Children's Church that helps to address the spiritual needs of our youngest member and that makes space for other children to "come unto" Jesus.

These are only some of the ways we've grown over the past six years, and it has been a great joy for me to shepherd you on this exciting journey. But take note: I have not been responsible for these wonderful and exciting developments. *You* have. *You*, along with the Holy Spirit, have built this house of prayer for all people. *You*, along with the Holy Spirit and a little guidance from me, have developed the ministries of this church. *You*, along with the Holy Spirit and a little guidance from me and some creative risk-taking on all our parts, have grown this community from a fledgling parish extension into New Covenant Metropolitan Community Church. *You* are the church, and with the Holy Spirit to empower you, you will continue to be the church after I am gone. New pastoral leadership will come and go, but the pastor is *not* the church. I hope you never forget that *you* are the church of Jesus Christ, and no transition of pastoral leadership changes that. You are fully equipped and empowered to be the church now and in the future, and I look forward to seeing all the ways you will continue ***creating community, inspiring spiritual growth, and transforming the world through the love of Christ.***

On August 24th, we will have a farewell event at the home of Debbie D. and Penny S. in Laurel. Folks will begin gathering at 2:30 p.m. At 3:00, we will have a time to honor one another and say our good-byes. After that, we will celebrate our final worship together, which will include a Rite of Membership for the incorporation of our newest members and a Ritual of Parting for David and me. After I depart, I will no longer be serving as your Pastor. I am bound by the guidelines set by our Regional Elder to have no pastoral or work-related contact with you for at least a year after leaving my position. I am leaving, but New Covenant Metropolitan Community Church continues. We entered this covenant by God's grace, and I know that God's grace will be with each of us as we journey forward.

I am grateful to have journeyed with you for these past six years. I look forward to our paths crossing again a little further along our pilgrimage.

In the Spirit,
Pastor Lance

Farewell Event

honoring Pastor Lance

Lance's last Sunday as our pastor will be August 24th, and we are planning a special social gathering in which we can honor his ministry, and he can honor ours, as we say good-bye. The event will be on Sunday afternoon, August 24th, at the home of Debbie D. and Penny S.. Directions are below. Please stay tuned for further information, plan to attend the farewell event and worship on August 24th, and spread the word to others.

Date/Time/Location: Sunday, 24 August at the home of Debbie D. and Penny S.: 8306 Maple Street/Laurel, MD 20707. People will begin gathering at 2:30; the event begins at 3:00 p.m.

Directions from Oaklands Presbyterian:

1. Make a RIGHT out of the church parking lot onto Rt. 197 and make a U-TURN at the first traffic light.
2. Make the first RIGHT onto Cherry Lane.
3. Go a short distance to Rt. 1 and make a LEFT. (This is a big intersection, there will be a shopping plaza on your left.)
4. Go a short distance to Cypress Street and make a LEFT.
5. Make your first RIGHT onto Jill Lane.
6. Make the next RIGHT onto Maple Street; it's the first house on the right.

Contact: Any member of the Board of Directors or Stacy R.



Recycle! Protect our Planet! Recycle! Protect our Planet!

Oaklands Presbyterian, our "host" church, now has its very own paper recycling dumpster. You can deposit any type of paper – junk mail, newspaper, cardboard, etc. Please make sure to recycle ALL unwanted paper products used during or after our worship services. And, if your neighborhood or municipality does not yet have paper recycling, please collect your paper and bring it to church with you. It's now a little easier for us to be good stewards of God's creation!

Vocational Blessing!

Sunday, 31 August, during Worship

On Sunday, August 31, there will be a vocational blessing during our worship.

You are invited to bring a small symbol of your work

- however you define your work. Be as creative and expressive as you like.

For example... if you are a student, you may bring a book...

.. if you are a restaurant worker, a small plate... if you are a bartender,
a cup... if you are retired, bring something that represents where you invest your time.

For example, if gardening, a trowel... if painting, a brush. At some point
you will be invited to come forward and place these items on the altar for a blessing
as a representation of the work you do, and the work we do together.

***Important Information about Pastoral Care
The Rev. Emma Chattin scheduled to serve
as New Covenant's Pastor on Call***

Until a Transitional Pastor is appointed, the Rev. Emma Chattin, an MCC minister who serves on the administrative staff of MCC NOVA, will serve as our congregation's Pastor on Call. She will be available to make hospital or home visits to the seriously ill and to provide care for the dying and bereaved.

Debbie D. will serve as Emma's primary contact in our community. To request care for yourself or someone else who is ill, dying or bereaved, please contact Debbie. She will contact Emma on your behalf. During regular office hours, you may also contact Emma at MCC NOVA: 703.691.0930

For all other congregational care needs, please contact the Congregational Care Team. The contact information for the Team's co-leaders, Annette D. and Chris L., can be found in the Ministry Leaders Directory section of the *Spectrum*.



New Covenant's Children's Church

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

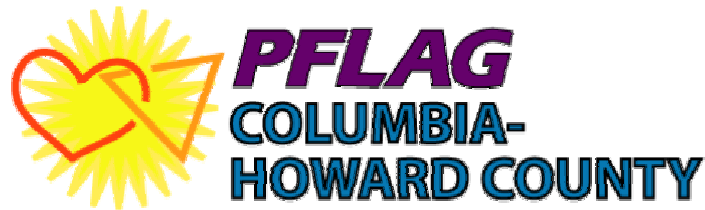
Our Children's Church will be taking a break for the month of August. But get ready for an exciting new school year to kick off on September 14th!

To support this ministry, contact one of our Children's Church leaders, Patrick H. or Tom M..

Minister(s) Needed! Minister(s) Needed! Minister(s) Needed!

After three years of dedicated service, Joshua Alexander is stepping down as the editor of *Spectrum* and the Coordinator of Internet Outreach. We keep Joshua close in our thoughts and prayers as he considers options for relocating to a new area after his dear friend, Roy's, death.

We are in great need of one or more people who can assume Joshua's important responsibilities: formatting, printing and copying the *Spectrum* newsletter, updating our church website and maintaining our MySpace page. Keeping our community updated in these ways will be vital during the upcoming period of transition. If you are willing and able to serve in any of these capacities, please see a member of the Board of Directors. Thank you for your prayerful consideration and your generous commitment!



Do Ask! Do Tell! Let's Talk!

Formerly "Everything You Wanted to Know But Were Afraid to Ask"

PFLAG Columbia-Howard County Announces

The August 12th, 2008 meeting at 7:30PM in the Owen Brown Interfaith Center

We thought it would be fun to gather together in our usual huge circle, write down questions (paper and pencils provided), pass them to our moderator and have a great time discussing anything and everything - all the issues affecting our GLBT community. This will be a fun-filled, laid-back meeting and yet very informative meeting. Please join us.

And please remember that the Columbia-Howard County PFLAG chapter welcomes everyone. We have a large gay and lesbian membership. And of course there's our Rainbow Youth Alliance, which welcomes GLBTQ kids and their straight supporters.

If you're a parent of a lesbian or gay child and need to talk, we always have someone there for you before, during and after the meeting.

About PFLAG Columbia-Howard County

We Keep Families Together!

The mission of PFLAG Columbia/Howard County is to support parents of gay children. We also welcome all people, gay, straight, bisexual or transgendered, as well as their families and friends. Together, we support each other, educate the broader community, and advocate for equality.

All meetings are confidential, free and open to everyone.

Our chapter's website and directions to Owen Brown Interfaith Center: <http://www.pflagmd.org>

A Call to Prayer



On 27 July 2008, an armed man entered a youth performance held at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (TVUUC) in Knoxville, TN. He opened fire and shot 8 people, killing two before he was tackled and wrestled to the ground by members of the congregation.

The news of these events, a tragic occurrence in the lives of Tennessee Valley UUC, has been difficult to bear for those connected to MCC sister church, Metropolitan Community Church in Knoxville (MCCK). During the first eight years in the history of the local congregation, MCC Knoxville worshipped and met in spaces hosted by the congregation of the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church. On July 27th, the two congregations shared a common bond. On July 28th they are one community sharing a common loss.

MCC celebrates and remembers the life of Greg McKendry, 60, one of two people killed in this incomprehensible shooting. Mr. McKendry, 60, was an usher and long-time member of TVUUC. Reports say that Mr. McKendry stood in front of the gunman to protect other church members. MCC Pastor, Bob Galloway shared that Mr. McKendry had been working on an upcoming financial presentation for the members of MCCK.

Chris Buice, the pastor at Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church has asked that MCC pray for the Church, those killed and injured, and for the family and friends of all involved. If you would like to send letters of support and condolences, they should be sent to:

Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church
2931 Kingston Pike
Knoxville, TN 37919

As the sun sets on 28 July 2008, the people of the Knoxville community will gather in a candlelight service. We join with them in this difficult time to remember the lives lost and to pray for all involved.

Founded in 1968, Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) is the world's largest and oldest Christian denomination with a primary, affirming ministry to gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender persons, along with their families and friends. Often referred to as "The Human Rights Church," Metropolitan Community Churches has members and adherents in 28 countries.



A Great New Book of Poetry by LGBT Christians!

This month marks the publication of the world's first poetry anthology devoted to works by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans Christians – ***Sanctified: An Anthology of Poetry by LGBT Christians***, edited by Justin R. Cannon. *The book contains three poems by Pastor Lance's cousin, Chad Gurley!* Copies can be purchased online at Amazon.com or www.SanctifiedAnthology.com. Direct purchases (rather than from Amazon) will best support this project.

Stewardship Update and Comparison Report

July 2008

Average Weekly Attendance: 30
 General Offering: \$4,072.00
 Fundraising: \$0.00
Total: \$4,072.00

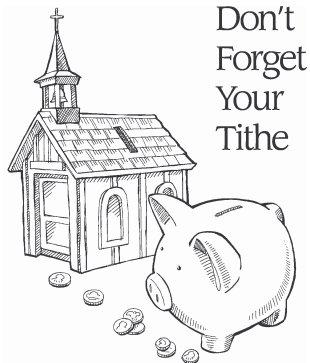
June 2008

Average Weekly Attendance: 28
 General Offering: \$5,354.00
 Fundraising: \$0.00
Total: \$5,354.00

July 2007

Average Weekly Attendance: 27.5
 General Offering: \$4,725.10
 Fundraising: \$0.00
Total: \$4,725.10

Our monthly expenses total **\$4,474.26**. That means that last month we collected **\$402.26 less** than our approved expenses for the month of July. Please check to ensure that you are up to date with your pledged contributions. The life and mission of our community is built upon your generosity.



New Covenant MCC Ministry Directory

Board of Directors

Moderator	Rev. Lance Mullins (revlancem@yahoo.com)	410.370.9663
Vice Moderator	Patty G.	
Clerk	Chuck I.	
Treasurer	David K.	
Ministries Council Chair	Jamison M.	

Team Leaders

Art & Environment	Annette D.	.
Minister of Music	Greg S.	.
Coordinator of Worship	Jamison M.	.
Congregational Care Team	Chris L. Annette D.	.
Spectrum	Joshua A.	.
Coordinator of Internet Outreach	Joshua A.	.
Coordinator of Hosting and Ushering	Marsha M.	.
Children's Education Coordinators	Tom M. Patrick H.	.