

The Lamplighter

Old Otterbein United Methodist Church

Winter 2008-2009

Pastoral Report

Presented at October 2008 Church Conference

Mission statement: We welcome everyone to share our heritage and grow in Christ.

State of the church: It is with humbleness and thanks that we praise God's work in and through our church this past year. We have seen an overall increase in membership of over 10%, which includes five baptisms. The "Young Adult Group" has doubled in size, taking on the activities of the former Men's group and getting involved in every church activity. They have also been dedicated in incorporating the social justice aspect through outreach and mission projects. Our small "Prayer Group" evolved into a powerful "email prayer group" that supports one another and the church. Consideration is being given to starting an off-site prayer group in the city, as well. Sunday morning Bible study/discussion ran through the summer this year and continues to be a fruitful place for individuals wrestling with faith issues and seeking nourishment.

Ongoing preparations are paving the way to offer more for the children in our church family and community. We adopted a Safe Sanctuary policy to ensure the safety of the children in our care. SPRC plans to hire a nursery attendant on Sunday mornings to assist church members in Naomi's Nursery; a Sunday school for older children will be in the room adjacent to the nursery. Our first Children's Christmas Pageant will be Dec. 7 in worship. In response to a request from the Downtown Baltimore Family Alliance, we will be hosting quarterly "Parents Night Out" for neighborhood residents starting in December. Children will be dropped off in our Nelker hall for music and crafts.

Old Otterbein UMC continues to reach out to those in need both in our community and in the world. We support eight various missions in downtown Baltimore both financially and with outreach. We held a spring and fall clothes drive; we prepared food and served it at the Helping Up Mission. We are currently collecting items to make "Bags of Grace" for the homeless. We support our bishop and denomination by contributing to the Hope Fund, UMCOR, Advance for Christ, and other special projects. This year we also began to sponsor Martha, a three-year-old Honduran

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Homecoming Celebration-Nov. 23

Old Otterbein UMC is calling upon its friends, neighbors, members, visitors, acquaintances, and any other good folks who would like to be a part of completely filling our beautiful sanctuary on just ONE Sunday this year so that 200+ human-voices can be lifted up to God's glory! The date is Sunday, Nov. 23 at our 11am worship. That is the Sunday before Thanksgiving... a full-house to glorify the Lord is a great way for us all to show our THANKS for all God has done for Old Otterbein over the centuries.

A rousing tailgate party will follow the service where we will serve hot dogs, hamburgers, and soft drinks out on the main lawn in front of the sanctuary! Come one, come all, and let's make this the most wonderful event of the Fall!

Immediate Upcoming Events

Nov. 23, Homecoming celebration

Dec. 6, Christmas Tree Set-up, 2pm

-all welcome to join in setting up the big tree in our sanctuary

Parent's Night Out, 4-7 pm

Dec. 7, Children's Christmas pageant,

-during 11am worship

Decorating the church for Christmas

-all welcome to stay after worship and decorate the church for the holidays

Aaron Androh concert, sanctuary 4pm

Dec. 14, Christmas Party & \$5 gift exchange,

-following worship

Dec. 24, Candlelight Christmas Eve, 7pm

Children's Christmas Pageant

...is scheduled this year during worship on Sunday, December 7 at 11:00am. All OO children, as well as friends from our neighboring suburbs, are welcome to participate. We will have designated parts, as well as plenty of extras. Any children whose families arrive early that Sunday will be able to grab a costume from our wardrobe box and have the option of being an "extra" in the pageant. Parents are welcome to accompany shy toddlers. Contact Holly Roberts for details.

Parents Night Out

Our church is offering neighborhood parents the chance to prepare for the holidays and have

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a relaxing afternoon by allowing us to entertain their children with crafts and games for a few hours on Sat., Dec. 6 from 4-7pm. The first 25 children (ages 2-10 years) that register will be accepted. We had 18 sign up the first day. This is the first of what we intend to be a quarterly outreach program offered in response to needs brought to our attention by the Downtown Baltimore Family Alliance. There has even been interest by one of our neighboring UMC's to partner with us in this program.

"Bags of Grace" for the Homeless

We have collected socks and pop-top soup cans for our latest outreach to the homeless in our community. These items will be combined into "bags of grace" that we can take in our cars and offer to individuals who approach us. Our church's policy is never to give out money directly to individuals, so this is one way we hope to meet their needs.

"Pot Luck dinners" and Financial talk

Old and new traditions are happening at fellowship hour on Sundays after church. As for the old---we had lots of laughs and fun at a Pot Luck dinner last month and man did we have some good grub, including two great homemade pies that Charles Dibble once again made. As for the new---Charles Tharp, Neil Donahue and Mike Peters led an open discussion regarding recent events and their effects on the financial markets. The talk was very well attended and members seemed keen to hold similar discussions in the future.

Sponsor child in Honduras

Our church family has a little girl in Honduras that we adopted through the Christian Children's Fund. She is almost four, and her name is Martha Lisbeth Leiva Delcid (big name for such a little tot). We have recently sent Martha presents for Christmas, which turned out to be a complicated process until we figured it out. The packages needed to be limited to three pounds or less, otherwise her family would have to pay a customs fee. They needed to be mailed two months ahead of time in order to arrive by Christmas day. The extra expense and legwork is well worth the feeling that we have been able to share our blessings our sponsor child this year. If you want to know more details about Martha, then look at her biography/picture in the Narthex or find one of her letters to us (translated into English) on the Nelker bulletin board. You can get involved by being her sponsor for one of the months in 2009 (less than \$30/month).

Welcome new members....

Kate Hodge, Allie Smith, Rhys Harding, Charles Dibble, and Charles Tharp...to our church family.

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child from the Christian Children's Fund, in addition to our African missionary Eugene Muembo.

Both the Trustees and Finance Committee worked hard this past year to order the church and much progress has been made. Buildings and grounds are looking good thanks to the hard work of many members, 2007 data was reviewed by a bookkeeper, and our 2008 financial records have all been computerized. We again paid 100% of our conference apportionments and saw a slight increase in offerings, however we still must strive toward the five-year goal of financial independence apart from our endowment.

We continue to grow in Christ as we worship. We share the Lord's Supper (communion) twice a month and have experienced the Spirit in a variety of ways including testimonies, liturgical dance, an altar call for spiritual healing, and music. We have sorely missed is our beloved pianist, who has not been able to join us this year but whose music still rings in our ears. Our historian continues to formulate plans for our history room, and we hosted over 600 people on tours this year.

May Christ use us to enable others to experience and grow in the power of the resurrection. May we continue to "*go and make disciples of all nations...*" (Mt 28:19)

Peace and grace, Pastor Mernie

Fall Clothes Drive

Allie Smith spearheaded our fall clothes drive this year. Bunches of clothes were collected for men, women, and children. They were sorted into groups and volunteers delivered four carloads to the following organizations: Susanna Wesley House, SOBER, Aunt CC's Harbor House at Centennial-Caroline UMC, and the Helping Up Mission.

2009 Church Council Members

Chair:	Sandy Hill
Pastor-Parish Chair:	Jessica Cantley
Finance Chair:	Mike Peters
Trustee Chair:	TBD 1/09
Church Treasurer:	Isabelle Obert
Lay Delegate:	Susan Federroll
Lay Leader:	John Hill
UM women reps:	Marcy Roberts
Pastor:	Rev. M. Crane
At Large Members:	Daniel Fisher, Pam Fisher, Doug Goings, Mary Goings, Mae Grider, June Risley, Edythe Parthree, Karen Harryman, Edwin Schell
Emeritus member:	Michaux Grammer, Bob Isenhardt, Shirley Bowen

In Loving Memory of

Brayden Hatchett, 9/29/08-10/21/08, as our love continues to surround Justin, Whitney, their family, and friends who miss him.

Christmas Poinsettias

Red Christmas poinsettias will be available to order end of November. The order forms will be available at church or you can call the office. You may designate "in honor of", "in dedication" or "in memory of". The deadline for these orders is the second week in December. Your poinsettias will be arranged around the sanctuary on Christmas Eve and available to take home after the service.

Try Something New—Be a Tour Guide

Fall and spring are the seasons for tours, many of which are confirmation classes visiting our historic church from other areas. In 2007 we had 700 people come through on tours, and we are getting close to hosting that number again this year! The few guides we have would really welcome your help in this area. If you have any interest, don't be timid about trying. Guides are given a three-page tour brief to use (reading it to the group is fine!), and Pastor Mernie can lead you through trial runs/have you watch tours. When questions come up that you can't answer, it is fine to say "I don't know". This is a fun way to share our heritage and love of Christ. Come try something new.



T'anks for Nuttin'

Thanks to our volunteers the Peanut Ministry grossed a healthy profit that will go toward the maintenance of our three historic buildings. A few small additions added to the efficient network that the original peanut packers and sellers have been perfecting over the years. At the beginning of the season Vern Roberts made us an easy-to-roll cart in order to transport the water and peanuts from the Nelker building to curbside. We added more carts and invested in a deep freezer to store ice and water. John and Sandy Hill hosted a "T'anks for Nuttin'" peanut party at the end of the season for our volunteers, complete with peanut/butter sandwiches, peanut soup, etc. No wonder we are known as the peanut church!

Young Adult Group

Our active Young Adult group meets regularly for potluck suppers and fellowship in the Nelker building. For information on upcoming events, email Jessica Cantley at jesscant@yahoo.com.

God's Garden and Grounds at Otterbein



Make sure you take time to admire the big changes that have taken place in our garden at Old Otterbein thanks to the generous donations of time and resources from the Gilford Garden Club, the Baltimore Convention center, and number of individuals who have offered their time and talent.

Volunteer Opportunities

To find out more about volunteer opportunities, email the following or call the church office

-**children's Christmas pageant**-Dec. 7
hollysroberts@yahoo.com

-**lay readers, ushers, greeters, acolytes**
jcarney@bei-civilengineering.com

-**newsletter and/or circulation** (quarterly)
-**children's ministries: Sunday school; nursery; parent's night out; weekday music ministry**

-**tour guide**
-**signboard ministry and or hanging banners**
-**fellowship meal coordinator**

-**organizing Easter/Christmas advertisements**
-**E-prayer group**
-**involvement in leading Lent activities**
pastor@oldotterbeinumc.org

-**nursery attendant for a Sunday**
sandy.Hill@healthways.com

-**history room/historian activities**
beccapsu@yahoo.com

-**Christian children's fund**
whitneybrueckner@hotmail.com

-**Homecoming celebration**-Nov 23
-**Hard Travelers Concert**-June '09
marcyroberts@hotmail.com

-**Parents Night Out** (quarterly)
khodg002@umaryland.edu

-**church website**
-**e-mail devotionals**
ibrahimdabo@gmail.com

Weddings

We rejoice with those who have been married at Old Otterbein recently...

- May 10 Todd Ill and Cheryl Rogers
- Aug 2 Harold Lemons and Nina Richmond
- Oct 4 Matthew Gallagher and Jennifer Perry
- Oct 15 David Heil and Kelly Gehrich



"Genesis" Study/Discussion

You are invited to join us for a lively conversation each Sunday morning at 10am before worship in the fellowship hall. Our current study is on the book of Genesis. Come with your questions, opinions and curiosity.

Our Organist Harley Perkins

Our organist, Harley Perkins, and our organ were both featured in the a recent issue of the local SoBo magazine. Extra copies of the magazine are in the fellowship hall.

Wish List for Susanna Wesley House

We are collecting things for the Susanna Wesley House through November. Items include: baby food, paper products, laundry detergent, plastic hangars, twin and full sheet sets, pampers, crib sheets, electrical outlet covers, towels and wash cloths, plastic storage boxes. Please mark your donations and leave them in the Nelker fellowship hall.

“We Care” Ministry

Old Otterbein has several members who are not able to join us regularly for Sunday worship and who need our prayers and support. On different weeks we share the name of an individual or couple, request your prayers, and invite you to send a card or call. We invite you to remember:

-*Shirley and Bob Bowen*/1411 Lincoln Woods Rd/Catonsville, MD 21228.

-*Geraldine Eccard*/8810 Walther Blvd. Unit 1519/Baltimore, MD 21234.

-*Michaux and Vi Grammer*/561 Sarah Ave./Linthicum, MD 21090.

-*Bill Joynes*/care of Bill Joynes Jr./1599 Homeland Dr. Unit 2A, Eldersburg, MD 21784

-*Gene and Eloise Lehman*/400 Roanoke Dr. Catonsville, MD 21228

Ruth Schell/715 Maiden Choice Lane PV308/Catonsville, MD 21228

Scripture Memory Verse

We continue to share some of our favorite words from scripture and challenge one another to memorize them. Some recent ones include:

“No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us” (1 John 4:12)
-Charles Tharp

“In everything do to others as you would have them do to you...” (Mt 7:12) -J. William Joynes

“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” (Ps 32:8)

Rebecca Carney

“Why are you downcast, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God.” (Psalms 42:5)

-Mary Goings

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” (John 14:27)
-MaryEllen Winter

“And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?” (Mt 6:27) -John Hill

“But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” (Amos 5:24) -Badie Dabo

“Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new.” (Proverbs 3:9-10-KJV) -Kenn Roberts

Hosting a Visiting Pastor

Old Otterbein UMC will be hosting the visit of the Rev. Sarah Mount from January 2-5. Rev. Mount is an elder in the New England Conference and a doctoral student of liturgy at Boston University School of Theology. She has been invited to attend the North American Academy of Liturgy at the Hyatt on Light Street. Rev. Mount and a female colleague will be staying in the bedroom on the third floor of our Schell House office. If you would like to be a part organizing their welcome, please call Pastor Mernie.

Nursery Attendant Needed

Our nursery is getting used on a more regular basis, so our congregation has decided to hire a nursery attendant on Sunday mornings. This individual would join one of our OO members in taking care of the children. All adults working with children in the church undergo background checks, as part of our safe sanctuary policy. Please ask anyone interested to contact the church office.

Sunday School

We want to offer an informal Sunday school for the children of parents attending worship. Since our small church family does not always have that age group every week, we ask that the families bringing children for Sunday school arrive 15 minutes before the service to ensure they will be accommodated.

Church Contact Information

Church Office: 410-685-4703, ext. 9

Rev. Mernie Crane:410-685-4703, ext. 1

Church Fax: 410-637-3996

Pastor: pastor@oldotterbeinumc.org

Church: <http://www.oldotterbeinumc.org>

Thursdays. Our congregation is working to make funding available in the future for families that qualify for assistance. In opening our buildings in this way, we hope to expand the ways in which we serve the needs of our community.

E-Prayer Group & Devotionals

Anyone interested in becoming part of our congregation's email prayer group, please contact the pastor. This prayer group was formed to address the needs and concerns of our congregation. The online communication and sharing of resources has permitted us to do so instantly. It also enables those who have access to a computer, but not a car, to participate in the prayer life of the congregation during the week. This prayer group is not designed to replace people coming together (in person) for prayer. It does, however, facilitate additional means of prayer to stay connected with God throughout our week.

The daily devotional is another way to stay centered from Sunday to Sunday. If you would like to be added to this, contact Ibrahim Dabo, ibrahimdabo@gmail.com.