

# The Lexington United Methodist Church

an inclusive and reconciling United Methodist Congregation

## Newsletter

February 2005

Vol. 53, No. 2

### From the Pastor's Study...

“This is the time of tension  
between dying and birth.”

- T.S. Eliot  
from *Ash Wednesday*

How good it is that the process for *Creating LUMC's Future* reaches its climax during the Lenten/Easter seasons! Even as these seasons invite us into a liturgical space where we hold death and new life in tension, so we as a congregation will move through an intentional process of dying-to-the-old and being resurrected-to-the-new life in Christ. Having made that journey himself, Christ will understand the anguish of our having to let go of “the way things have always been.” Sorrow and grief accompany such a time. Christ will grieve with us. Similarly, our faith teaches us that endings make room for new beginnings. Christ will rejoice with us as we create future possibilities for this faithful congregation. Christ will be there with us in these resurrection moments.

And so I invite you into a prayerful Lenten season. Let us make these forty days and nights holy ones and the Lenten Sundays worshipful ones. Let us seek God's wisdom and guidance for Lexington UMC each day. Won't you join me in a daily time of morning prayer? and some form of a “fast day” each Wednesday? and commitment to Sunday worship and 11<sup>th</sup> Hour study? Each of these opportunities provide sacred time and space for prayer – both talking and listening to God. And such solidarity can only enhance and empower our *Future Search* weekend (March 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>) and subsequent conversations upon the proposed actions that are generated during that *Future Search* weekend.

In her Lenten guide *The Rising*, Wendy Wright asks “What is God's longing for our lives?” God's will is not a puzzle to be solved but a mystery to be lived into. I trust that the shape and contours and design of that mystery will emerge for Lexington UMC as we journey together in these Lenten days.

May we faithfully seek and joyfully know the constancy of God's companionship.

With great hope and expectation,



Rev. Susan J. Morrison

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# February Worship 2005

## Lent

Lent begins early this year with Ash Wednesday falling on February 9<sup>th</sup>. Throughout February and March, our worship experiences will intentionally parallel a Lenten Small-Group study and experience in Spiritual Formation called *Companions in Christ: The Way of Grace*. Each week at the Sunday morning 11<sup>th</sup> Hour we will share our reflections on the gospel story. Daily reading and prayer is a part of this Lenten study.

### February 6 Last Sunday after the Epiphany Service of Word and Table

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

*New Tablets of Stone* will be Rev. Susan's sermon reflection using lessons from Micah 6: 6 - 8; 1 Corinthians 1: 18 - 31 and the Beatitudes from Matthew 5: 1 - 12.

### February 9 Ash Wednesday

8:00 pm Worship with  
St. John's Korean UMC

This traditional Ash Wednesday service will include the distribution of ashes and Holy Communion. Scripture lessons are from Joel 2: 1 - 2, 12- 17; and Matthew 6: 1- 6, 16-21.

### February 13 First Sunday of Lent

9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

*Wandering in the Wilderness* will be Rev. Susan's sermon topic as she reflects on the lessons from Genesis 2: 15 - 17; 3: 1 - 7 and Matthew 4: 1 - 11.

### February 20 Second Sunday of Lent

9:00 Communion in the Library  
9:15 Praise Music; 9:30 Worship

*Nicodemus* will bring us his story on this second Sunday of Lent. John 3: 1 - 17 records his story. Andrea Laux will be the preacher.

## February 27

### Third Sunday of Lent

### Roxbury Food Cupboard Collection

*The Samaritan Woman* will tell us her story which will also be read from John 4: 5 - 42. The Nicaragua delegation will share reflections on their recent trip to Nicaragua and we will sing and celebrate our faith in the style of our Central American sisters and brothers.



### 11th Hour Lenten Study

Plan to be a participant in the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Lenten Study that begins on Sunday, February 13. The Lenten Study Guide, *Companions in Christ: The Way of Grace* is available for \$11.00. The daily exercises will prepare participants for Sunday's Gospel lesson and worship experience. During February, the weekly topics will include:

- ◆ Week 1 (for February 13)  
Companionship for the Journey
- ◆ Week 2 (for February 20)  
Nicodemus: The Gift of Renewal
- ◆ Week 3 (for February 27)  
The Samaritan Woman: Being Fully Known

## Baptism Preparation Class

### Sunday, March 13 for Baptism on Easter Sunday, March 27

In the tradition of the early church, the Sacrament of Baptism and Reception of New Members is being planned for Easter Sunday. A Baptism Preparation class will be held on Sunday, March 13. Please speak to Rev. Susan if you plan to attend or if you would like to join the church on Easter Sunday.

# Creating Lexington UMC'S Future

Each month this page will provide updates on the process and progress of *Creating LUMC'S Future* ~ Watch for announcements of important all church gatherings!

## Upcoming Events

Opening Conversations

- Sunday, January 30, 2:00 - 4:00 pm
  - Thursday, February 17, 7:00 - 9:00 pm
- March 4 - 6: *Future Search* Weekend Event

## Opening Conversations

The first of our "Opening Conversations" was held on January 10. We started in the library but scattered to groups around the Sanctuary for two sessions of assorted topics of our choice.

In the library after opening prayer for guidance, eight slots were opened for topics in each of two sessions. Anyone could convene a topic by placing it in one of the time slots. We then left to join the topic of our choice. The one rule we were given was "the law of two feet," meaning you could move freely from group to group as you chose, visiting as many as you wanted during each session. Discussion was recorded on newsprint so it was easy to catch up on what a group had been discussing if joining it late. If a group felt they were finished they could disband early and all go to other groups. If a group felt unfinished at the end of the first time period, they could opt to reconvene in the second timeframe.

We hope after reading this you will *seriously* consider being part of the conversations postponed from January 23 to January 30 at 2 pm. Our future is still in our hands. Come and be heard!

You will see that in the topics for the evening there was some overlap. Some groups chose to combine while others took different aspects of the same topic.

The topics for the evening were:

- ◆ Alternatives and Options to Explore
- ◆ Important Characteristics and Priorities of LUMC
- ◆ Building Options
- ◆ War and Peace
- ◆ Social Justice
- ◆ 2600 Massachusetts Ave – The Building
- ◆ United Methodism
- ◆ LUMC Committee Structure
- ◆ Why grow?

## Sampling of the Opening Conversation Discussion

### Alternatives and Options to Explore:

- ◆ Affiliate with a United Church of Christ giving pastor "standing" in both denominations
- ◆ Merging with another UMC
- ◆ Sharing some staff with St. John's Korean UMC
- ◆ Unite with St. John's Korean UMC

### Important Characteristics and Priorities of LUMC:

- ◆ Bond that exists between members
- ◆ Strong Music program
- ◆ Strong Spiritual leader
- ◆ Strong Outreach Program
- ◆ Caring Support
- ◆ Rich Adult Education and Prayer
- ◆ Mentoring – Intergenerational
- ◆ Allow for differences – effect of this on growth
- ◆ We attempt to dialogue rather than debate

### Building Options:

- ◆ Work with the United Methodist Deaconess Association to develop our site to house LUMC, St. John's, MWS, and accommodate long term care and a retirement center.
- ◆ Be realistic about our space needs – we have more than we need
- ◆ Make better use of the current building

### War and Peace:

- ◆ Make LUMC visible as a beacon of peace-making
- ◆ Become a Peace with Justice Congregation (a process is required to claim that designation)
- ◆ Returning to the radical Gospel of Jesus Christ
- ◆ Take positions as a CHURCH
- ◆ Educate ourselves on violence and non-violence

*continued on page 4*

**Are we being faithful to our understanding of the Gospel?**

continued from page 3

### **2600 Massachusetts Ave – The Building:**

- ◆ What % of giving/budget should go for building vs programs?
- ◆ Someone else manage building (like Deaconess)
- ◆ **Reasons to stay:**
  - ◆ St. John's and Methodist Weekday School
  - ◆ Sanctuary
  - ◆ Our identity as a congregation
  - ◆ Our services and resources to the community
- ◆ **Reasons to leave:**
  - ◆ Too big
  - ◆ Unaffordable
  - ◆ "albatross"
  - ◆ If we do nothing, we won't have a choice

### **Social Justice:**

- ◆ This is our Hallmark
- ◆ Biblically Grounded
- ◆ Should we "focus" on a few or promote all kinds of causes

### **United Methodism:**

- ◆ We ARE a UMC Church
- ◆ Changing would be difficult and risky
- ◆ We can't leave the denomination without leaving the building and parsonage
- ◆ Federating with another denomination?
- ◆ The UMC "Open Doors" slogan is hypocritical
- ◆ Merge with another UMC – Arlington, Waltham
- ◆ Change our Name to Better reflect who we are – we are more open than the denomination

### **LUMC Committee Structure:**

- ◆ Consolidate and simplify – N.O.W. model for programs
  - ◆ Nurture
  - ◆ Outreach
  - ◆ Worship
- ◆ Same people rotate among committees – over-extended
- ◆ Statistic – small number of members willing/able to take on monthly commitments
- ◆ Trend – hire rather than staff with volunteers
- ◆ Changing the structure could improve communication
- ◆ Timeframe to consider this – 2006
- ◆ Currently organized like a larger "program church" but we are a pastor-oriented sized church

### **Why grow?**

- ◆ If we don't grow we can't support who we are
- ◆ We need to bring in new converts to what we believe
- ◆ Certain groups are under represented
- ◆ Growth is a means, not a goal
- ◆ We grow because of what we believe and manifest that belief
- ◆ Need to find people who connect with our spirituality
- ◆ People looking for an extended family

The Coordinating Team

*Julie Barnette, Smoki Fraser, Keith Herndon,  
Andrea Laux, Kathy Parks, Janis Roihl,  
Bill Santelmann, Rev. Susan Morrison,  
and Derek Kotze and Rick Lent, consultants*

## **Christmas Card Generosity**

During Advent, we raised a total of \$110.00 through our Christmas Card Exchange Program. This money was divided equally between the Roxbury Food Cupboard and the Lexington Food Pantry to help feed the hungry in our midst. Many thanks to all who contributed.



- Betty Lehr

## **Finance Corner**

Total 2004 receipts to LUMC through 12/31/04:  
\$303,292

Total 2004 expenditures by LUMC through 12/31/04:  
\$293,460

Total 2004 expenditures budgeted through 12/31/04:  
\$234,625

Note that the actual receipts and expenditures include money into and out of designated funds like Nicaragua funds and parsonage funds. So this will appear higher than the budget number.

Thanks to everyone for helping us keep LUMC financially healthy during the year. While we as finance committee deeply appreciate your pledges and contributions we also acknowledge that as a church, it is our spiritual contributions that are most essential for our growth and health.

Also please take a moment to review the budget for our 2005 fiscal year which was approved by a vote of the Administrative Council on January 12.

Thanks again. *-Keith Herndon*

*Finance Committee Chair*

# Lexington United Methodist Church Budget 2005

The 2005 budget was passed at Administrative Council on January 12, 2005. Please direct questions to Keith Herndon or members of the Finance Committee

*Contingent upon Rev. Susan J. Morrison serving as pastor through at least December 31, 2005.*

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2004	2005	Budget
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Increase
<b>PASTOR'S SALARY</b>							
Salary	50,794	53,010	53,188	55,270	55,788	55,270	0%
TOTAL	50,794	53,010	53,188	55,270	55,788	55,270	0%
<b>STAFF &amp; SUPPORT</b>							
Music Director	6,170	15,231	14,010	9,667	11,961		
Organist/Accompanist	12,236	550	4,198	9,667	7,552	2,844	Accompanist
<b>Organist/Music Director Total</b>			18,208	19,334	19,513	16,500	-15%
Office Administrator	14,207	16,143	16,194	15,915	17,605	17,170	8%
Pulpit Supply	0	75	125	150	250	150	0%
Christian Ed Director	5,252	8,691	8,820	8,946	8,937	9,200	3%
Youth Coordinator	500	0	0	0	0	0	
Intern	832	833	2,167	1,000	500	1,000	0%
Children/Youth Choir Dir.	1,478	1,596	1,169	1,633	1,108	1,700	4%
Social Security	3,221	3,213	3,349	3,648	3,679	3,800	4%
Worker's Compensation	250	281	407	312	513	500	60%
Health Insurance	6,192	6,160	13,892	12,663	11,703	12,900	2%
Pastor Health Ins. Copay	0	0	0	480	480	480	0%
TOTAL	50,338	52,772	64,331	64,081	64,288	63,400	-1%
<b>MISSION SHARES (CONFERENCE)</b>							
World Service / Benevolence	11,579	11,088	16,812	13,886	13,886	10,752	-23%
General Conf Benevolence	801	667	975	826	826	977	18%
Ministerial Support	24,715	21,990	33,056	29,893	29,893	30,300	1%
Administration	4,441	3,691	6,872	6,652	6,652	6,842	3%
TOTAL	41,536	37,436	57,715	51,257	51,257	48,871	-5%
<b>LUMC MISSIONS</b>							
Safe Havens	250	250	250	250	250	250	0%
Reconciling Ministries	250	250	0	250	500	300	20%
Respecting Differences				100	100	100	0%
TOTAL	500	500	250	600	850	650	8%
<b>PARSONAGE EXPENSES</b>							
Water	783	513	523	800	533	600	-25%
Electricity	1,131	691	500	0	0	0	
Fuel Oil	1,184	941	1,114	0	0	0	
Propane	319	161	261	0	176	150	
Telephone	600	600	418	0	143	0	
Maintenance	994	604	1,072	1,000	922	1,000	0%
Insurance	390	591	523	750	0	900	20%
Contributions to Cap. Fund	0	0	12,220	3,000	3,000	10,000	233%
Refurbish Parsonage			2,407	0	0	0	
TOTAL	5,400	4,100	19,038	5,550	4,773	12,650	128%
<b>CHURCH EXPENSES</b>							
Lexington UMC Corp	41,360	43,410	40,092	40,810	45,182	55,000	35%
Office Expense & Postage	4,532	3,129	3,008	3,800	3,897	3,800	0%
Telephone	1,989	2,372	2,720	1,700	1,881	1,700	0%
TOTAL	47,881	48,911	45,820	46,310	50,960	60,500	31%

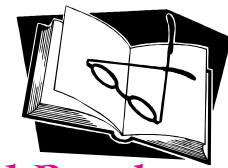
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## Lexington United Methodist Church Budget 2005 (continued)

	2001 Actual	2002 Actual	2003 Actual	2004 Budget	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	Budget Increase
<b>WORK AREAS, PROGRAMS</b>							
Youth Group	0	96	30	150	0	150	0%
Christian Education	2,526	1,391	1,541	3,500	1,878	2,500	-29%
Worship	2,074	753	379	550	158	500	-9%
Music		2,173	343	3,800	3,112	2,150	-43%
Children's Choir	12	0	77	250	91	200	-20%
Fellowship/Hospitality	49	0	0	100	0	100	0%
Outreach	929	607	700	750	500	1,000	33%
Stewardship	34	599	367	750	500	750	0%
Adult Education	0	0	0	50	0	100	100%
Financial Secretary	34	109	74	300	129	300	0%
Treasurer	197	170	251	300	223	300	0%
Membership Cultivation	60	29	0	50	113	100	100%
Communications Ministry	1,062	939	1,132	1,500	1,016	1,500	0%
Administrative Council	0	0	0	0	35	0	0%
50th Anniversary	200	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,177</b>	<b>6,865</b>	<b>4,895</b>	<b>12,050</b>	<b>7,755</b>	<b>9,650</b>	<b>-20%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>203,627</b>	<b>203,594</b>	<b>245,237</b>	<b>235,118</b>	<b>235,672</b>	<b>250,991</b>	<b>7%</b>
Direct Missions/Special Off	49,100	48,761	40,018		41,485		
Designated Funds/Reimbursement	13,522	19,419	21,526		19,303		
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>266,249</b>	<b>271,774</b>	<b>306,781</b>		<b>296,460</b>		
<b>NOTE: TOTAL MISSIONS SPENDING</b>	<b>49,600</b>	<b>49,261</b>	<b>40,268</b>		<b>42,335</b>		
<b>BUDGET INCOME</b>							
Gross Pledges				165,609		186,208	12%
Pledges Received in Prior Yr				(12,692)		(13,400)	6%
Pledges	124,617	141,754	149,549	152,917	144,288	172,808	13%
Prev Year Pledges	2,040	2,932	4,520	5,500	3,397	3,400	-38%
Next Year Pledges	12,200	6,800	12,692	13,000	13,400	13,000	0%
Loose Plate & Gifts	9,659	4,648	2,153	3,000	3,868	2,000	-33%
Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas	5,801	4,936	3,798	5,500	4,511	4,000	-27%
Methodist Weekday School	35,972	23,104	32,115	35,358	46,376	36,041	2%
Fund Raising	5,121	18,246	13,837	3,000	3,285	3,000	0%
Parsonage Capital Campaign			6,145	0	0	0	
Parsonage Rental Net			10,720	16,350	21,546	17,400	6%
Special One-Time Gift			5,000	0	0	0	
Expend. from Operating Bal.							
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>195,410</b>	<b>202,420</b>	<b>240,528</b>	<b>234,625</b>	<b>240,672</b>	<b>251,649</b>	<b>7%</b>
Direct Missions/Special Off	49,100	48,761	37,580		36,207		
Designated Funds/Reimbursement	6,357		11,393		28,225		
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>250,868</b>	<b>251,181</b>	<b>289,502</b>		<b>305,104</b>		
(Shortfall)/Surplus	(8,217)	(1,174)	(4,709)	(493)	5,000	658	
(Shortfall)/Surplus - Inc. Direct Mission/Desig. Funds	(15,381)	(20,593)	(17,279)		8,644		
Operating Balance (01 Jan.)	15,100						

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# Adult Study Opportunities



## Sunday Morning 11<sup>th</sup> Hour

On February 6, we will welcome Humaire Kirmani and her sister Afshan Kirmani to the **11<sup>th</sup> Hour Study**. They will share the second in a two part series on *Islamic Religion and Muslim Family Traditions*. This is intended to be a time of sharing and learning.

Beginning on February 13, the First Sunday of Lent, the **11<sup>th</sup> Hour Study** will use the book, *Companions in Christ: The Way of Grace* as a resource for a small group experience in Spiritual Formation. This Upper Room book invites participants to do individual reading and daily exercises throughout the week and then share experiences in a weekly meeting. Following the lectionary gospel readings, this book will provide meaningful prayer and conversation around Jesus and his healing, transformative ministry with Bartimaeus, the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, and Lazarus as well as reflection on the death and resurrection of Jesus. The book is available for \$11.00 and may be purchased on Sundays during Fellowship Time or from Allyson Printz in the church office.

Plan to attend these 11<sup>th</sup> Hour studies. If you would like nursery or childcare during these sessions, please let Rev. Susan know so that coverage can be arranged.

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**March Newsletter**  
**Articles due**  
**Tuesday, February 22, 2005**  
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## Bibles and Bagels *God at 2000*

On Monday mornings from 10:00 – 11:30 am, the Bible and Bagels Study Group will continue viewing and discussing the video series *God at 2000*. Internationally known scholars from the worlds of Islam, Judaism and Christianity share their views on God. Conversation follows the viewing of the video. Prayer is always shared and good fellowship is promised.

Newcomers are always welcomed. Join this lively conversation on Monday mornings. There will be no meeting on Monday, February 21, Presidents Day.

## Prayer Practices: Fasting

Join us at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> for a conversation on *Fasting* facilitated by Rev. Susan.

The discipline of fasting is an ancient Judeo-Christian tradition. It is a way to clear away our own preoccupations, emptying ourselves so that we can be more responsive to God's intentions for us. The beatitudes claim that God blesses those who hunger and thirst after righteousness – a right relationship with their Creator.

Fasting takes many forms. It can be a simple "cutting back" on the food and drink that we consume; or it can be a partial fast of simply missing one meal during the day; or it can be a more complete fast of drinking only water and fluids for part or all of a day.

During this one hour workshop on *Fasting*, we will explore the meaning of fasting and share our experiences of fasting.

Questions? Please contact Rev. Susan.

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## Parsonage Rental Budget FY 2005

*Contingent upon Rev. Susan J. Morrison serving as pastor through at least December 31, 2005.*

	2003 Actual	2004 Budget	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	Budget Increase
<b>PARSONAGE RENTAL EXPENSES</b>					
Property Tax	0	5,600	0	0	
Realtor's Service Fee	1,300	900	900	900	0%
Pastor's Gift	1,800	7,200	7,200	7,200	0%
Yard Care	1,780	1,150	1,554	1,500	30%
Gift to Lexington UMC Corp				3,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,880</b>	<b>14,850</b>	<b>9,654</b>	<b>12,600</b>	<b>-15%</b>
<b>PARSONAGE RENTAL INCOME</b>					
Rent	15,600	31,200	31,200	30,000	-4%
Net to LUMC BUDGET	10,720	16,350	21,546	17,400	6%
Note: Security Deposit	2,600				

# Saturday, January 22: A Day of Solidarity in the New England Annual Conference

In spite of the blizzard, fifty people from New Hampshire to Worcester braved the weather to attend the **Day of Solidarity** at LUMC for Beth Stroud who was defrocked for coming out to her congregation as a lesbian in a committed relationship. Similar events were held at the same time in Bangor, Me; Springfield, MA; and East Providence, RI.

After gathering in Martin Hall for welcome and hospitality, we convened in the sanctuary for a time of worship. Our call to worship in English and Spanish asked “How deep is your hunger? How long can you wait in order to be fed the bread which will sustain you?”

This was followed by the hymn *Who will stand forth?* which in part says:

*Where can we find strong advocates for justice,  
Who value all God's cherished humankind?  
Where are the faithful, whose full promise, "Trust us,"  
Will see that others won't be left behind?*

*When will we learn, O Church, in all our glory,  
That every child of God – each daughter, son –  
Must be accepted, if the "good news" story  
Is to be finished and Christ's life work done?*

We then introduced ourselves and prayed, blessings for one another and the event.

Before sharing our personal reactions to Beth's trial and verdict, we heard Ecclesiastes 3:1-9. *For everything there is a time... to weep, to laugh, to heal, to build up, to mourn, and to dance.*

Then each person had a chance to share words of reaction to the trial and verdict and to the current stand of our denomination on matters of homosexuality and the homophobia it exhibits. Those gathered confessed feelings such as great anger, anguish, fear, outrage, injustice.

Next we listened to the words of Beth's first sermon after her conviction and defrocking. She opened with:

*One of the characteristics of the life of faith is the experience of counterintuitive joy. Just when the logical response to external circumstances would seem to be anger, or frustration, or despair, the person of faith may experience a strong, deep sense of confidence and gladness. In the midst of suffering and disappointment, laughter wells up from the depths of a person's heart. In times of terrible losses*

*and setbacks, a person nevertheless discovers a song in her heart.*

At this time we shared our own experiences of Confidence and Counterintuitive Joy.

Returning to Martin Hall, we identified areas of interest for action suggestions and gathered in those groups.

## Action Group Topics

- ⌘ Beth's Appeal – She has two strong grounds on which to appeal
- ⌘ Actions involving finance – Since no General Church or Annual Conference funds may be used to support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) issues, might we redirect mission shares or find some other way to be true to our reconciling statements?
- ⌘ Educating about the Reconciling Ministries Network
- ⌘ Ecclesiastical Disobedience – What actions are appropriate when ecclesiastical decisions conflict with Gospel conscience?
- ⌘ New England Annual Conference – Plan actions during this year's Annual Conference
- ⌘ Dialog within a church community where there is no agreement

Each of these groups produced many ideas for action which were prioritized.

At 4:45 pm, we gathered in the library for a conference call with the three other sites to share our experiences of the day. Bangor reported in with 57 people, Springfield with 6 and East Providence with 10. So in spite of the weather, nearly 125 people gathered for this **Day of Solidarity**. Each site shared some of their action plans and there was a good deal of overlap among the sites. There was an amazing sense of community as we all prayed together via modern technology.

We thought at this point, with the snow coming down seriously, that people would be running for their cars, but that was not the case. People had brought wonderful casseroles and desserts and stayed to enjoy them and for fellowship.

Follow-up will be planned. Anyone who was not there and would like to be on the notification list, please send your email address to jroi1@rcn.com.

# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

## FEBRUARY GODLY PLAY

This month the children of *Godly Play* will be learning several of the parables of Jesus. Jesus truly was a wisdom teacher and there is no better example of His wisdom than the parables of the Gospels. Let us all pray this month that the wisdom of Jesus is transferred to our children as they engage in these *Godly Play* Sessions:

- February 6 The Great Pearl
- February 13 The Sower
- February 20 Faces of the Journey:  
The Newborn Baby (Lent I)
- February 27 Faces of the Journey:  
The Boy Lost and Found (Lent II)

Lent is a great time to give your child the gift of *Godly Play*!!

## WHAT IS GODLY PLAY?

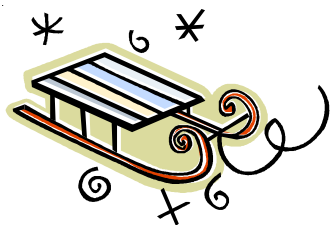
*Godly Play* is a Christian Education program which grew out of the Montessori method of education. *Godly Play* is designed to honor each child as a spiritual person with his or her own spiritual journey and to teach children about worship and scripture experientially through the worshipful atmosphere of the classroom and the carefully told lessons.

## HOW DO I KNOW MY CHILD IS LEARNING?

The most important part of *Godly Play* is the experience of the worshipful environment and the respect for each child as having a spiritual journey. You may find that your child retells the lesson of the day or that he or she wonders during the week about the story. Feel free to engage your child about the week's lesson by being open to your child's point of understanding in the lesson.

## WILL MY CHILD ENJOY GODLY PLAY?

One of the goals of *Godly Play* is to create a safe and welcoming space for children. Because everything is designed for them, most children like *Godly Play* and look forward to coming.



## NQMA News

(Not Quite Middle Aged)

### Covenant Group

This February, the NQMA will be engaging in a covenant study of *Scarred By Struggle, Transformed By Hope* by Joan Chittister with study guides by Janis Roihl. We will be meeting the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm in the Library. If you were unable to attend one of the covenant groups this fall, please come and join us!

Questions? Contact Andrea at lauxaj@yahoo.com.

## Youth News

Hey youth! Keep listening for our Winter FUN Activity brought to you courtesy of snowy weather!

Questions? Contact Andrea at lauxaj@yahoo.com.

### Youth Lock-IN Thank You!!

Thank you again to all who helped make our January Youth Lock-IN a success! Eight youth locked the doors of the church and threw away the key for a night of FUN and FELLOWSHIP!

Thanks again to our parents for providing meals and snacks, and our chaperones - Ben Beckwith and Kathy Parks!

### Concerns and Celebrations

Prayers and condolences are with Jane Hogan and her family on the death of her father, Delbert Borden on January 6, 2005.

## Thank you!

*As always, your Christmas purse was generous and most appreciated. Thank you for the gift, but more importantly, thank you for the gift that each of you is to LUMC!*

*With gratitude, Rev. Susan*

*Many thanks for the generous gift!*

*- David Babbidge*

*Many thanks for the Christmas check and card that Keith Herndon presented on your behalf!*

*Thank you, Allyson Printz*

# REACHING OUT. . .

## PRE-PACKAGED TSUNAMIS

We have just witnessed one of nature's most devastating and cataclysmic events as a magnitude 9.0 earthquake deep in the sea caused a gigantic tsunami wave that has killed about 234,000 innocent men, women, and children. We have witnessed terrible scenes of bodies, destruction, and grief-stricken survivors whose survival was also in danger unless aid arrived quickly. That aid did arrive, thanks to an incredible outpouring of funds from individuals and governments worldwide, and the immediate crisis seems to be in control a month later. If there is anything "good" about this disaster, it has to be this loving, and often sacrificial, assistance to the survivors!

Some ask why God allowed such a terrible thing to happen. Was it an act of God? Or was the loss of life caused by human failure? Tsunamis are well-known phenomena on this beautiful but restless earth, and a very effective tsunami-warning network exists in the Pacific around its Ring of Fire. It has delivered timely warnings on many occasions and saved innumerable lives. But no such warning system was in place in the Indian Ocean despite the obvious danger! Was that God's failure or ours?

How our hearts wept as we saw survivors mourning the loss of a child or spouse, or scenes of unbelievable destruction. How painful it was to hear the steadily increasing numbers of dead day-by-day for a month! What can we do to prevent such human failures in the future? We can start by abolishing our pre-packaged tsunamis! And what could they be?

It may come as a surprise to some to realize that we have created, with our best scientific talent and at immense cost, devices small enough to be transported in an SUV or airplane, each of which has pre-packaged several tsunamis worth of death and destruction! Why do we possess such devices? Under what circumstances and upon whom would we unleash such deadly fury? In fact, there has been no use of these devices in over 50 years because of their excessively destructive power, despite many occasions when their use has been considered. Consequently, the public is no longer concerned, the media are silent, and the danger is never mentioned in political discourse.

The United States has about 10,000 (yes, ten thousand!!) of these "thermonuclear" devices, and maintains about 2,500 in missiles ready for instant launch in a launch-on-warning, hair-trigger alert. As

Christians, is it not time for us to lead the struggle to abolish them before they are used, accidentally or maliciously, to incinerate millions upon millions of innocent lives?

An editorial by Bill Santelmann

- On behalf of LUMC, your Outreach Committee voted to send \$350 through UMCOR for Tsunami relief to aid our fellow brothers and sisters.
- Because you have been placing donations in the Equal Exchange coffee can on Sunday mornings, our Equal Exchange coffee has become self-supporting. Thank you for helping this important ministry.

## LUMC VISIT TO NICARAGUA

We, Rev. Susan and Jay Morrison, Linda Rings, Julie Munro, and Don Walker, are eagerly looking forward to our trip to La Borgoña on February 17 and hoping that snow will not delay our going or returning on February 22 or 23. We hope to be with the congregation of Dios Es Amor and all those who showed us such wonderful hospitality last year. We will be meeting with the doctor, sewing director, those who run the computer school and the students we support. We will be able to see first hand the new computers and air conditioning that we purchased for the computer lab. We also intend to visit Cheryl Avery and go to the dump to see the conditions the people lived in before they came to her farm. We ask the congregation to pray for a safe and fruitful and spirit-filled trip for us.

From Linda Rings

## A LETTER FROM LA BORGONA

From: Rosa Nely Hernandez Calero,

October 21, 2004

"Esteemed brothers and sisters, the reason I am writing is to tell you that I am finishing my second quarter of the year at University. I am very pleased, because thanks to God, I received good grades. I also want you to know that I have been teaching classes in the Mana School during the school year that is now finishing. We are preparing now for graduation. It is a joy to write to you again and take the opportunity to thank you one more time, and God, and the pastor of your church for the support you have offered."

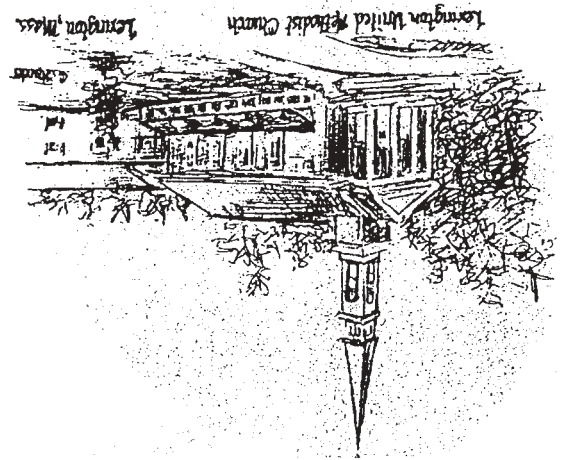
For the Outreach Committee by Bill Santelmann

# February 2005 - Lexington United Methodist Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Noon Lexington Interfaith Clergy Assoc.  7:00 pm Taizé Prayer Service  7:30 pm Worship	3	4	5
<b>6</b> <b>Last Sunday after the Epiphany Service of Word and Table</b> 8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care 9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4); 10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 10:30 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 11:00 am Adult Study 12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries	<b>7</b> 10:00 am Bible and Bagels  1:00 pm Respecting Differences  7:00 pm <i>Creating LUMC's Future</i> Coordinating Team	<b>8</b>   7:30 pm Christian Ed. Meeting	<b>9 Ash Wednesday</b> 6:30 pm Finance Mtg. 6:45 pm BU Field Ed. Internship Cte. 7:00 pm Ad. Council 8:00 pm Worship with St. John's	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> <b>First Sunday of Lent</b> 8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am Children's Choir Rehearsal 9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care 9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4); 10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 11:00 am Adult Study 12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries	<b>14</b> <b>Valentine's Day</b>  10:00 am Bible and Bagels	<b>15</b>   7:30 pm Not Quite Middle Agers	<b>16</b> 7:00 pm Taizé Prayer Service  7:30 pm Prayer Workshop	<b>17</b> 7:00 pm Opening Conversation <i>Creating LUMC's Future</i>  Nicaragua Delegation leaves	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> <b>Second Sunday of Lent</b> 8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care 9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4); 10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 11:00 am Adult Study 12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries	<b>21</b> <b>Presidents' Day Office Closed</b>	<b>22</b> <b>March Newsletter Deadline</b>  7:30 pm Corporation Meeting	<b>23</b> 7:00 pm Taizé Prayer Service  7:30 pm SPRC Mtg.  Nicaragua Delegation returns	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>   9:00 – 11:00 Lexington Food Pantry
<b>27</b> <b>Third Sunday of Lent</b> 8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care 9:30 am Worship; <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 4); 10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 11:00 am Adult Study 5:00 pm Cambridge Welcoming Ministries  <b>Roxbury Food Cupboard Collection</b>	<b>28</b> 10:00 am Bible and Bagels  6:00 pm Outreach Meeting (Santelmanns')					

**Important Dates to Save in Your Calendar**

- February 17, 7:00 pm: Opening Conversation
- March 4 – 6: *Future Search* Weekend Event



**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**LEXINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
*an inclusive and reconciling congregation*  
2600 Massachusetts Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02421-6718

## Our Sunday Program

- 8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal
- 9:15 am Praise Music; Nursery Care
- 9:30 am Worship; *Godly Play* (N - Gr. 4)  
Youth Study (Gr. 5 - 8)
- 10:30 am Fellowship in Martin Hall
- 11:00 am Adult Study
- 12:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal



## February 2005 Newsletter

**Rev. Susan J. Morrison, Pastor**  
Andrea Laux, Christian Education Director  
Pastoral Intern  
Daniel Roihl, Music Director/Organist  
David Babbidge, Sexton  
Allyson Printz, Office Administrator



**Creating LUMC's Future**

**Opening Conversations**



Sunday, January 30, 2:00-4:00 pm  
Thursday, February 17, 7:00-9:00 pm

Future Search Weekend Event  
March 4 - 6, 2005

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