

The Lexington United Methodist Church
an inclusive and reconciling United Methodist Congregation

March 2011

Newsletter

Vol. 59, No. 3

From the Pastor's Study...

Miracles

Generally speaking, I'm a rather rational, scientific sort of person, and not at all inclined to supernatural causes for phenomena which are difficult to explain. But I do believe in miracles.

Let me give you a personal example. As many of you know, I have recently moved to Lexington, where I will spend the last four months of my appointment to LUMC. I have rented my house in Salem, in hopes that I will one day return from Germany and will resume residency there. So back in January, I happened to be in Lexington on a Saturday and ran into Becky Linton at the Stop and Shop. In our brief conversation I mentioned that I had just found tenants for my Salem house and that I would be looking for a place to stay, hopefully in Lexington. Becky thought for a moment and related that she had just been talking to Michele Derrick at the Food Pantry, and that she was moving to an apartment in Boston, but did not want to sell her condo in East Lexington. Maybe she would be willing to work something out with me. After three weeks I followed up on this lead with Becky and, to make a long story short, Michele was delighted to be able to offer me her place, completely furnished. She was moving out at the very time I needed a place to live. Now calculate the odds: chance conversations, a wonderful offer, at exactly the right time. I call that a miracle, because I just want to sit back and say, "Wow!"

Recently, we have seen a rising tide of popular movements in North Africa and the Middle East. Long time dictators in Tunisia and Egypt have fallen. Uprisings are underway in Algeria, Libya, Yemen, and Jordan as people demand an end to the despotism which has oppressed them. People in Iran and China and Palestine have become re-energized in their struggles against tyranny. Freedom fever has even spread to Wisconsin, where the governor of that state has threatened to severely curtail collective bargaining rights for public employees. Tens of thousands of workers are crying out: "Fight like an Egyptian (a reference to the mostly peaceful mass protests which unseated Hosni Mubarak)." They have gathered in increasing numbers to protect the rights for which their forbears in the union movement had struggled. I never would have imagined seeing thousands of people occupying a state house in my lifetime. I call it a miracle.

I have seen other miracles in my life, and have reminded people of the most unlikely events which we have witnessed: the end of apartheid in South Africa, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Saints winning the Super Bowl! Who could have ever imagined. I call them all miracles, because they make me affirm that anything can happen.

It's even possible for God to become human, to reveal the divine presence to the world, to transform humanity in a way that portends a future realm of peace and justice, love and forgiveness. Rational? Scientific? I can't say. But certainly miraculous, because to believe in the possibility makes all things new and inspires hope for us all. Whenever we grow discouraged, or succumb to cynicism, we should remember all the marvelous things which surround us and God's amazing miracles of life.



Richard Capron, pastor

March 2011 Worship

Worship begins at 10:00 am with Prelude,
Gathering Music and Nursery Care



March 6 Transfiguration Sunday Holy Communion

Exodus 24: 12-18; Matthew 17: 1-9

Sermon: *Out of the Clouds*

March 9 at 8:00 pm Ash Wednesday

Holy Communion with St. John's KUMC
2 Cor. 5: 20b-6: 10; Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

Sermon: *Where Is Your Heart?*

March 13 First Sunday in Lent Daylight Savings Time Begins

Romans 5: 12-19; Matthew 4: 1-11

Sermon: *Where the Spirit Leads*

March 20 Second Sunday in Lent

Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17; John 3: 1-17

Sermon: *Where Is the Help?*

March 27 Third Sunday in Lent Roxbury Food Cupboard Collection

Romans 5: 1-11; John 4: 5-42

Marla Marcum
Director of Christian Education, preaching

Prayer List Updates

To update the prayer list printed in the weekly worship bulletin, contact Richard Capron or Allyson Printz. Also, if you know of someone in need of a pastoral visit, please inform Richard.

Michael Anderson, Marilyn Antonellis, Marisa Beecy, Antonio Carlos, Shilpa Carlson, Bonnie Codier, Cal Coffey, Ione and John Garing, Cynthia Good, Family of Camille Goodwin, Muriel Grimes, family of Marcia Guay, Peter Haritos, Jane Hogan and her sister Lynda, Jim Hogan, Myles Johnson and family, Lennie Leitman, Pastor Absalon Lopez and Felix, Norma Monbouquette, Steve Mosiello, Bill Santelmann, Shannon Searson, Scott Tolar, Rainer von Saleski, Don Walker and Elizabeth Walker.

Adult Studies in March

11th Hour for Adults

Beginning on March 13, the 11th Hour for Adults and Youth will focus on our spirit nature of trust, love and freedom. All of us have a personality. But each of us is more than our personality. We will be using the book *Jacob's Dream* to explore our spirit nature (Trust, Love, and Freedom). It uses the enneagram analysis of personalities to assist us in our spirit journey. Basically, this book is about describing pathways to Spirit Maturity. Christians have called this Sanctification and Buddhists say Enlightenment. We might also call it Aliveness. Our twelve session study ends on June 19.

Newsletter Deadlines

Send your submission to office@lexumc.org.

3/28/11 • 4/25/11 • 5/23/11 • 6/27/11

Church Building Update

At the end of December 2010, the Corporation had 18 of inches insulation installed in the attic over the sanctuary, chancel and choir room. There was very little insulation in these areas. This completes insulation work in the church since all possible attic areas have been covered.

Igor and Jorge Luiz spent two days shoveling snow off of the two flat roofs of the building in February to keep them in good shape. The church sustained a small amount of damage from a reoccurring ice dam despite keeping the heat tapes on.

We hired a contractor to remove accumulated snow from the parking lot and place it in the front yard of the church. The preschool directors are looking forward to playing around these snow mounds in May!

The church has leased a new photocopier for 63 months. We pay a monthly lease and a service agreement based on the number of pages copied (so only copy what you need, please).

We are keeping both sets of double doors closed at the main rear entrance during the heating season to conserve energy and have installed new astragals (weather stripping between the doors).

The nursery is undergoing a renovation due in part by the increase in the number of infants in the St. John's congregation.

- Allyson Printz (for the Corporation)

Jacob's Dream

A Christian Inquiry into Spirit Realization

Jacob's Dream explores our spirit nature (Trust, Love, and Freedom) and uses the enneagram analysis of personalities to assist in our spirit journey. The book also describes the important role that community plays in Christian nurture.

This book is about using the Enneagram as a religious method, moving beyond personality to our essential trust, love, and freedom, and probing the role of spirit community and solitude.

How does a system of personality types help us liberate ourselves? Aren't we more than a simple type? The answer is *yes, we are*. Human beings are complex and mysterious, but in fact, our personalities are based primarily on repetitive habits and patterns. Our personalities are not the whole of our psyches, although they are enormously important in that they largely affect the way we see the world and interact with it. Thus, the personality is a kind of filter that potentially limits us and our freedom.

Secondly, remember that the reason we learn our Enneagram type is to remind us to come back to the present moment when we see our personality drawing our attention into its particular preoccupations and reactions. When we use our knowledge of the types this way, they become liberating rather than constricting us in old identities.

Third, it is in the act of seeing ourselves objectively that something lets go in us: a new possibility is created when we allow the grace available in the moment to touch us. We discover that at our deepest we are not our personality. Our essence reveals its many facets – acceptance, love, authenticity, forgiveness, compassion, courage, joy, strength, and presence as well as gratitude, vitality and boundlessness - and all of the other manifestations of the human spirit. By moving beyond merely knowing our type to the ability to see ourselves as we are, the shift from personality to essence takes place and we discover that we can live differently. We discover that we can be free.

The Enneagram is only a treasure map, and it is up to us to make the journey: only we can accept the daily challenge and adventure that is our life, love and liberation. We can then begin to recognize our true life self.

- Ken Kreutziger

One Great Hour of Sharing

(Sunday, April 3, 2011)

UMCOR aids farmers hit by Haiti's earthquake

To increase food production in the earthquake-impacted areas of Haiti, United Methodists are supporting a project that will encourage farmers in the practice of "passing on the gift."

The United Methodist Committee on Relief is teaming up with the Methodist Church of Haiti to implement the cooperative effort, similar to the model used by Heifer International. In October, UMCOR directors approved funding of \$292,500 for the six-month project as part of the denomination's earthquake relief and recovery work. Your generous gifts to the **One Great Hour of Sharing** offering supports the operational costs of UMCOR.

"Sixty percent of Haitians still earn their income through farming," said the Rev. James Gulley, who visited Haiti in November 2010 in his role as an UMCOR adviser on agriculture and community development.

The region of Haiti known as the West Department was the area most severely impacted by the earthquake. Afterward, more than 660,000 people migrated to other parts of the country in search of food and shelter, according to estimates by the U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

Early concerns that farmers would be forced to sell their seeds did not become as big a problem as anticipated, Gulley said. Another fear was that if large amounts of food aid continued to flow into Haiti, it would "discourage farmers from actually farming in the growing season."

The Methodist Church in Haiti has been a leader in agricultural development, at one point operating three agricultural training centers to prepare people to become agriculture extension agents. "In more recent years, some of those programs had declined," Gulley said.

The new emergency agricultural assistance program, said Rev. Marco Depestre, an agronomist and secretary of the Methodist Church of Haiti, will allow the church "to reach out to farmers, members of the peasantry -- among the poorer people in Haiti -- and help them boost their production, as many were decapitalized by the earthquake."

- adapted from UMNS article by Linda Bloom, multimedia reporter based in New York

Marla's Musings

As we journey together into the season of Lent, I am prayerfully considering what spiritual discipline I will take on. Lent is a time of fasting and praying, of deep soul-searching and preparation for our annual celebration of the Resurrection. It makes sense that many of us have learned to think of Lent as a time when we "give something up," but I have been re-imagining Lent for myself as a time to take on a spiritual discipline. This is not a new idea, but it was certainly new to me when I encountered it a few years ago. My understanding of the difference between "giving up" and "taking on" goes something like this:

The spiritual discipline of sacrifice can be an important practice for the growth of our own souls and for the good of other people and otherkind. But when we think of it as giving something up, abstaining from something we enjoy (but only for a time), we may be framing our Christian journeys too negatively. This kind of self-sacrifice as self-denial approach is dangerous because it is almost impossible to maintain as a way of life without developing feelings of self-righteousness or bitterness. Of course, some people can avoid these dangers, but what might we gain from re-framing Lent as a time to pick something up, rather than as a time to put something down?

To sacrifice is to surrender or give up, or permit injury or disadvantage to, for the sake of something else. When we focus on the first half of the definition – voluntary suffering or self-denial – we are oriented toward the negative, tempted to feel self-righteous, and unlikely to be able to stick to this discipline for long. It's no wonder that we look forward to the end of Lent because forty days is about all we can manage when we think of the journey as an exercise in voluntary suffering.

Perhaps we can begin to think of our Lenten journeys as spiritual disciplines that we take on, as joyful offerings to God and our neighbors? Have you ever "given up" anything for Lent? Take a moment to think about how your Lenten journey might have been different if you had approached that commitment to give something up instead as taking up a spiritual discipline. For me, it is much easier to integrate into my life (and not just the forty days of Lent) things that I take up. This attitude also helps me to understand the cycles of the Christian year. Every year, I have the opportunity to integrate another spiritual discipline into my life. Every year, I am

invited to begin again to take up commitments and practices that bring me closer to God and help me to be part of building the kin-dom of God right here and now.

Of course, sacrifice often involves some kind of suffering. There's no doubt that Jesus' sacrificial act was awash in suffering, but I have learned to look to the second half of the definition of sacrifice – it is *for the sake of something*. I believe that when our discipleship focuses on the suffering that Jesus endured, we miss the salvific moment. Jesus was willing to suffer because Jesus was living for something. His focus was not on the suffering. This is the true meaning of sacrifice, and this is why it makes sense to speak of joyful sacrifice.

What will you take on this Lenten season?

- Marla Marcum, Christian Education Director

Nursery Schedule

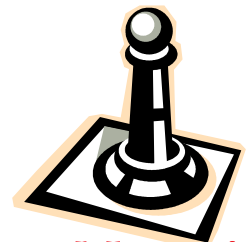
- March 6 Theresa and Melanie Walker
- March 13 James Chin and Janice Herndon
- March 20 Kathy Parks and Jane Atkins
- March 27 Julie Munro and Pisha Chen

Godly Play

- March 6 Children attend worship
- March 13 Becky Linton, Melanie Cooke
- March 20 Rae Lavalla, Louise Kreutziger
- March 27 Lara Anthony, Mark Thompson

Acolyte Schedule

- March 6 Andy and Leo
- March 13 Jasmine
- March 20 Theo
- March 27 Ryan



All Church Game Night!

Sunday, March 20; 5:00 pm

The Witness committee is sponsoring an evening of games and pizza on Sunday, March 20 for the whole church family. Come join the fun! Bring a favorite game but be prepared to play other games! For information, contact Shawna Johnston (781-863-2230).

2011 Social Justice Endowment Grants

The mission statement for the Social Justice Endowment is: The fund seeks to support programs, which promote and enhance the dignity and welfare of people in unjust circumstances and which address underlying systemic inequities and causes of injustice.

Last year in 2010, three grants for a total of \$3,000 were awarded.

1. The Big Sister Big Brother Orphanage Program in Ukraine was awarded \$2,000. They will implement the 2010-2011 cycle of the Big Sister Big Brother Orphanage Program, and will continue exploring ways to make the program sustainable and viable. They will also continue to disseminate information about the program to other communities, documenting the benefits of the program to participating children.

2. The Immigrant Workers Center Testimony Video by Centro Presente was awarded \$500.00. Centro Presente educates Latino immigrant workers about their labor rights and empowers them to organize and advocate for themselves. The financial backing will be used to support the in-house production of a video about the exploitation of immigrant workers through testimonies to use as an outreach tool for presentations

3. The New England Climate Summer was awarded \$500.00. Climate Summer is a project of Students for a Just and Stable Future (SJSF), who work to build student leadership and to engage diverse communities more fully in the work of the grassroots climate movement. Climate Summer 2010 was a nine week unpaid internship opportunity for college-aged students.

We encourage you, the congregation, to provide the committee with suggestions you might have for us to contact groups to invite them to prepare a proposal. In 2008, Julie Munro suggested we invite two students from Tufts to submit their India child development project. Maryna Vashchenko, one of our last year winners, is another student in that same department. The other two winners last year were people Rev. Capron had met and encouraged to apply. Marla Marcum, one of the Climate Summer leaders, later became our Christian Education Director. Is there a group within the congregation that would like to begin its own project? Do you know anyone wishing to start an effort with social justice implications who needs financial support? Feel free to talk with committee members about any ideas.

Here is our schedule:

- ❖ Receive suggestions to the Committee by Sunday, March 13, 2011 at noon; leave suggestions in Endowment committee church mailbox.
- ❖ Committee meets to confirm letters of invitation for proposals on Monday, March 14 at 7:30 pm.
- ❖ Target date for sending out invitations is March 25.
- ❖ Date for applications to be returned is May 13, 2011. The Committee will review them; questions will be asked of respondents as necessary.
- ❖ Grants will be awarded at the Committee's meeting on Monday, June 13, 2011 at 7:30 pm and all applicants informed.
- ❖ Funds will be distributed after July 1, 2011.

- Ken Kreutziger

Chair, Social Justice Endowment Committee

By faith we are called.
By our works we are known.
Seeking peace with justice.

- LUMC's 50th Anniversary Motto



Finance Corner

In January 2011, our financial results were as follows:

Total LUMC income through 1/31/11:
\$20,727

Total income budgeted through 1/31/11:
\$20,364

Total LUMC expense through 1/31/11:
\$15,303

Total expense budgeted through 1/31/11:
\$19,689

This is a good beginning for 2011.

- Eric Shank, Chair, Finance

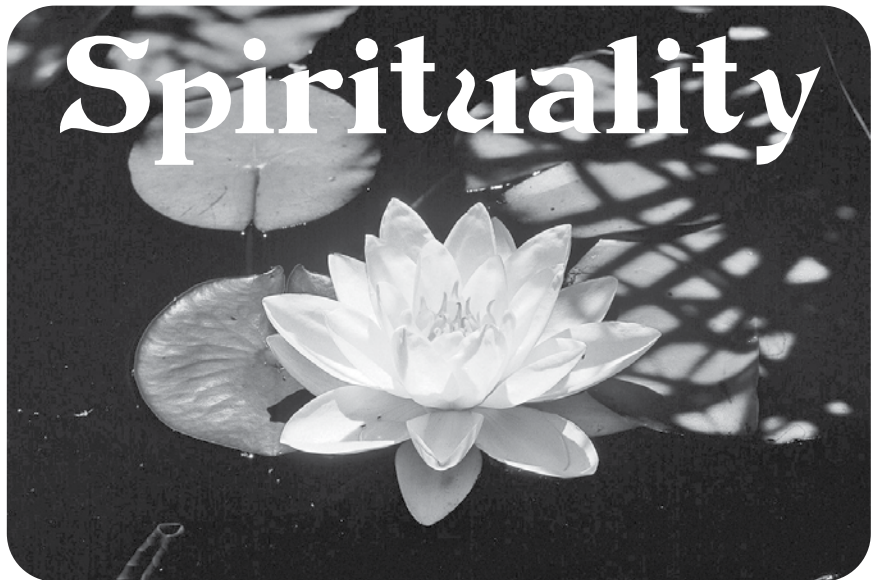


ECOLOGY *e*

*a retreat for people concerned
about healing the Earth and
our relationship with it*

*Led by Yvonne Prowse
Spiritual Director*

*The fullness of joy
is to behold God in everything.
– Julian of Norwich*



Saturday March 19

9 AM-2 PM

**Sacred Heart Parish Center
21 Follen Rd., Lexington MA 02421**

Cost \$25 includes a simple lunch

This retreat is rooted in developing a deeper relationship with Creation, as a part of our relationship with God, and healing the Earth by healing our relationship with Creation. We will consider the rich Christian tradition that tells us the natural world and everything in it is an expression of and reflection of the Creator. We reflect in gratitude upon Creation and pray with the natural world, listening to what it can teach us. We address healing the Earth in practical terms – from reducing our personal use of resources to advocating for legislation – **approaching all of this through hope.**

Participants have found this retreat expanded their horizons, opened their hearts and deepened their relationship with the natural world; helped them become more conscious of their part in the societal structures that are causing harm to Creation; inspired them to make changes in their day-to-day lives; brought them to a deeper appreciation of the Resurrection, and helped them see Creation in a new light.

Yvonne Prowse is a spiritual director with an MA from Fordham University in spirituality and spiritual direction. She is an adjunct staff of St. Ignatius Retreat House in Manhasset, NY.





Sponsored by Massachusetts Interfaith Power & Light. Register by March 12, 2011 by mailing a check made out to MIP&L to: **RETREAT, Mass. Interfaith P&L, 197 Herrick Rd., Suite 22, Newton Centre, MA 02459.**

You may also register online at www.mipandl.org. Click on the link to the online registration on our homepage.

Fee is \$25 in advance; \$30 at door. For more information email vince@MIPandL.org or call 617-244-0755.

March 2011 - Lexington United Methodist Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 12:30 pm Newsletter Collation 1:30 Book Club 3:00 pm Jazz Time	2	3 8:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal	4	5
6 Transfiguration Sunday Holy Communion 8:45 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship; Nursery Care 11:00 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 	7	8 3:00 pm Jazz Time 7:15 pm Nurture Committee	9 Ash Wednesday 8:00 pm Communion with St. John's	10 8:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal	11	12
13 First Sunday in Lent 8:45 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship; Nursery Care 10:00 am <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 5) 11:00 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 11:30 am 11 th Hour for Adults and Youth <div style="background-color: #e0ffe0; border-radius: 15px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Daylight Savings Time begins </div>	14 7:30 pm Social Justice Endowment Cte.	15 9:45 am District Committee on Ministry 3:00 pm Jazz Time 7:30 pm Finance Meeting	16	17 St. Patrick's Day 10:30 am Witness Committee 8:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal	18	19 9:00 am – 2:00 pm Ecology and Spirituality retreat (Sacred Heart)
20 Second Sunday in Lent 8:45 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship; Nursery Care 10:00 am <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 5) 11:00 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 11:30 am 11 th Hour for Adults and Youth 5:00 pm All Church Game Night & Pizza	21	22 3:00 pm Jazz Time 7:00 pm Corporation Meeting	23	24 8:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal	25	26 8:30 – 11:15 Lexington Food Pantry 
27 Third Sunday in Lent Roxbury Food Cupboard Collection 8:45 am Senior Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am Worship; Nursery Care 10:00 am <i>Godly Play</i> (N - 5) 11:00 am Fellowship in Martin Hall 11:30 am 11 th Hour for Adults and Youth	28 Newsletter Deadline	29 3:00 pm Jazz Time	30	31 8:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal	April 1 12:30 pm Newsletter Collation	

Game Night and Pizza on Sunday, March 20 at 5:00 pm

March 2011 Newsletter

Rev. Richard Capron, Ph.D., Pastor
Ian Woods, Music Director
Marla Marcum, Christian Education Director
Allyson Printz, Office Administrator

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**All Church
Game Night
and Pizza!**
Sunday, March 20
5:00 pm

Sunday Program

8:30 am Senior Choir Rehearsal
10:00 am Worship; Nursery Care
10:00 am *Godly Play* (N-5)
10:00 am Youth Group
11:00 am Fellowship in Martin Hall
11:30 am 11th Hour for Adults and Youth

LEXINGTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
an inclusive and reconciling congregation
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Lexington, MA 02421-6718

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

