



Bay Shore United Methodist Church

THE SPIRE

The Rev. Dr. Sungmu Lee

January 2014

Happy New Year! As we begin another year, I think of Christian Initiation, baptism. As we celebrate the baptism of the Lord on January 12th, I think of the meaning of baptism. “Remember your baptism and be thankful,” we say in our times of baptismal renewal.

I have no memory of my baptism which was done when I was an infant. That is why we have the confirmation. In fact, John Wesley did not practice the confirmation because he believed that once baptism is done, it will be effective forever even if you do not remember it. Once you are baptized, you are the child of God even if you deny it. As soon as you are baptized, you are under the grace of God.

However, unlike John Wesley, we modern United Methodists practice the confirmation, and our church has 13 confirmands this year. After the one-year education, they will decide if they confirm their baptism or not. If the baptism was the decision of their parents, the confirmation is their own decision. They may not remember their infant baptism, but they will remember that they are confirming their baptism: “Remember your baptism and be thankful.”

Most scholars agree that there are five chief metaphors of baptism in the New Testament. The first metaphor of baptism is the union with Jesus Christ. Baptism conveys to each baptized both the death of Jesus and the possibility of resurrection through him. The ancient practice included a going down into and rising from a watery grave. This was a way to make literal this sharing in Christ’s death and resurrection.

The second is the incorporation into the church, Christ’s body. Baptism is the sign-act of entrance into the church no matter at what age it is practiced. That is why in some churches fonts are placed near the entrance to church buildings and some rites involve an entrance procession into the midst of the building and people.

The third is the new birth. This is closely tied to union with Christ in death and resurrection and to joining a new body, the church. The image of new birth appears in Jesus’ discussion with Nicodemus: “No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born from water and spirit.” New birth is the most feminine of images, and some fonts have been designed to suggest a pregnant woman.

The fourth is the forgiveness of sin. The most obvious thing about baptism is the cleansing action of water representing the forgiveness of sin. Both 1 Peter and Hebrews compare baptism with an outward washing and the inward cleansing of a good conscience. The fifth is the reception of the Holy Spirit. Jesus’ own baptism has a theophany of the Holy Spirit visible as a dove. Sometimes, the coming of the Spirit seems manifested most clearly by the laying on of hands.

When I baptize anyone, I invite you, the congregation, to join in the vows because, as the baptized, these are your vows. When you renew your baptismal vows, you are invited to remind yourselves of the 5 meanings of baptism. You have promised, or it has been promised in your behalf, to submit to the righteousness of God in your life.

“Remember your baptism and be thankful!” Our life is not ours but God’s. Thus, let us live like the children of God in the year of 2014. Amen.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD!

Notes from the Music Director



Happy New Year to all! I trust you've made your New Year's resolutions. Here is a list of resolutions prepared by the Rev. Walter Schoedel of Trinity United Methodist Church in Lafayette, Indiana. He calls them '7-UPS for the New Year.' No, this has nothing to do with the soft drink. These 7-UPS fall under the heading of attitudes and actions.

The first resolution is **WAKE UP** – Begin the day with the Lord. It is the Lord's day. Rejoice in it. The second is **DRESS-UP** – Put on a smile. It improves your looks. It says something about your attitude.

The third is **SHUT-UP** – Watch your tongue. Don't gossip. Say nice things. Learn to listen.

The fourth is **STAND-UP** – Take a stand for what you believe. Resist evil. Do good.

Five – **LOOK-UP** – Open your eyes to the Lord. He is all around you, don't miss him.

Six – **REACH-UP** – Spend time in prayer with your adorations, confessions, thanksgivings and supplications to the Lord.

And finally, **LIFT-UP** – Be available to help those in need – serving, supporting, and sharing.

If you're going to make New Year's resolutions this year, let me suggest Rev. Schoedel's list. These are great resolutions.

Music Rehearsals

There are no music rehearsals schedules for the month of January. Chamber Choir, Youth Choir, and Penataquit Handbell Choir rehearsals will resume in February. We will prepare for Lent, and the Resurrection of our Lord. Anyone wishing to join one of our music groups, please see me about getting involved. New members are always welcome!

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS

January 2	Ellen Fager, Evan Nock
January 3	Rashida Charles
January 5	Ally Sullivan
January 4	Shirley Giesler
January 6	Fran Vinas
January 11	Doreen B. Enin
January 12	Don Navratil
January 15	Jacob Sawyer
January 18	Regina Schneider
January 19	Elijah Smith, Anna S. Hoffman
January 20	Nancy Erale
January 21	Kwaku G. Owusu
January 23	David Allen, Michael Falcon, Abigail Seyda
January 24	Adwoa Enin, Michael Renwick, Jr.
January 25	Heather Molaro
January 27	Robert Booy II, Steven Hemmerle, Eric Schneider
January 28	Dee Navratil, Lynda Ruter, Ginger Sullivan
January 29	Jacob Fahey
January 30	Mary Hemmerle

ANNIVERSARIES

Jan. 3	Samuel and Vida Owusu
Jan. 19	Ebenezer and Doreen Enin
Jan. 21	Norman and Flaye Stahl

OTHER DATES TO REMEMBER

Soup Kitchen

Thursday - 4:30 p.m.

Thrift Shop Wednesday 12:00 noon - 3:00 p.m. Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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