

Worship 8:30 and 11:00. Sunday school 9:45.

the LUMC March 2008

# Sunbeam

*lansingunited.org*



Lansing United Methodist Church  
Route 34B and Brickyard Road, South Lansing

Pastor: Bill Gottschalk-Fielding • Program Associate: Marilyn Paradise • Youth Coordinator: Kevin Dunn



## Is It I, Lord?

**Maundy Thursday Dramatic Presentation**

**March 20 at 7:00 PM**

*Holy Week Services 2008*

**Palm Sunday, March 16 • Maundy Thursday, March 20 •**

**Good Friday, March 21 • Easter, March 23**



## Heart and Soul

### From the Pastor

Scholars believe that when the Gospel was coming together in written form, the first full narrative put on parchment was the story of Holy Week: The Triumphal Entry (Palm Sunday), The Last Supper (Maundy Thursday), and The Crucifixion (Good Friday). The early Christians understood Jesus' last days in Jerusalem to be the heart and soul of the Good News.

That's not to say the rest of Jesus' life was just a "footnote" to Holy Week. His teachings, the stories about his healings and miracles, and the traditions about his birth and early life were written down, too, and considered very important. But Holy Week—the story of Jesus' last days—came first. The message is clear: to understand Jesus, you've got to understand the last week of his earthly life, the week we call Holy.

I hope you will plan to be a part of our Holy Week services as we recall Jesus' final days. We begin our remembrance with palm branches and "loud hosannas" on Palm Sunday, enter the Upper Room to share time with Jesus and the Disciples on Maundy Thursday with the incredible production of "Is It I, Lord?" and conclude Good Friday with an evening service focusing on Jesus' "Seven Last Words."

As someone once said, you can't get to Easter Sunday without going through Good Friday. It's true, not only in terms of the calendar but, more importantly, in terms of the heart.

+Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Ben*

### Maudy Thursday Presentation Is It I, Lord?



On Maundy Thursday, March 20, at 7:00 PM, the drama "Lord, Is It I" will be presented in the church sanctuary. You will join Jesus and his disciples in the Upper Room, as the Last Supper, as envisioned by Leonardo da Vinci, comes to life. Following the play, holy communion will be served.

## Farewell and Thank You

Richard and Kay Moore have stepped down as financial secretaries, after several years of faithful service. This job is extremely complicated because the financial secretary keeps track of all donations made to the church for many different purposes and then makes a report back to the donors. That's a lot of reports! Thanks for your service, Richard and Kay.

### Welcome and Thank You

Bill and Sandy Dhimitri have agreed to take over this complicated position as financial secretaries. Thanks for your willingness to serve, Bill and Sandy.

## One Great Hour of Sharing is March 2

Water brings hope to so many. UMCOR helps vulnerable people look forward with hope through programs that dig community wells in Afghanistan, Darfur, and Sudan. One Great Hour of Sharing makes this important work possible.

Here is the importance of One Great Hour of Sharing. By contributing to this offering, you make it possible for UMCOR to fund its existing mission work. Because of this offering, when you designate money to specific causes, 100 percent of those designated gifts goes to the specific cause that you designate. UMCOR keeps no money for overhead on designated gifts.

You can designate a gift for a specific cause at any time. You can place your contribution in the offering plate. Make your check to LUMC, designating the specific cause on the memo line. You can also send a check to UMCOR, P.O. Box 9068, New York, N.Y. 10087-9068. See UMCOR's work at [gbgm-umc.org](http://gbgm-umc.org).

## Prayer Chain

### Prayers for Healing

Darrel Bacorn, 70 Asbury Rd.  
Brian Cleveland (discharged from Roswell Park Cancer Inst.), % Sid and Sandy Cleveland, 18 Lakeview Dr.  
Bill Earl, 2000 East Shore Dr.  
Sissy Fenner, 620 Lansingville Rd.  
Deforest Heffron, Elcor Health, 48 Colonial Dr., Horseheads  
Amber Heimbuecher  
Bill King  
Marie Larison, POB 77, Lansing  
Maxine Nicholls, 178 Virgil Rd., Dryden 13053  
Harry Reinhart, 615 Ridge Rd.  
Frannie Sampson, 1138 Auburn Rd. (Groton)  
Tom Skroback, 401 Fenner Rd.

### Prayers for Strength

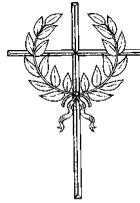
Mourning family of Raymond Gottschalk

### Please pray for those in our armed services:

Ken Allen	Shaun McCray
Richard Butler	Travis Potter
Matthew Cornell	Nick Prabhavat
Scott Cowles	Josh Randles
Steven Cowles	Matthew Ravas
David Ferris	Adam Ward
Trevor Judd	

### Also pray for

- Our three mission teams in Guatemala
- At Rural Mission in South Carolina:  
Jeff Sandsted



## Worship in March

A number of people have commented on how early Easter seems this year. Spring will hardly have “sprung” by the time we’re putting out the lilies, breaking out the brass and shouting “He is risen!” But that’s okay. Good news like Resurrection can’t come too soon. Maybe this will be the year the message sinks a bit deeper into our souls. Worship will certainly be a place where such seeds of love and transformation can be planted. So ignore the calendar (and the snow!) and join together as we conclude our Lenten journey and set off once again as Easter People. (And don’t miss our Maundy Thursday presentation, as explained elsewhere. The 13 actors involved have been working diligently for two months to offer the gift of this drama to God and you. It will be a great blessing.)—P.B.

March 2—Fourth Sunday in Lent: “What the

Heck Does a Loving God Have to Do with Hell? Some Christians make a big deal about a place of final punishment for wrong-doers; others dismiss the idea as a medieval notion completely contrary to the teachings of Jesus. Is there a place for Hell in our theology?

March 9—Fifth Sunday in Lent: “What’s My Responsibility to the Poor and Vulnerable?” Jesus said “you will always have the poor with you.” Some have taken this to mean he didn’t want his disciples to focus on the physical needs of people, but on their spiritual needs. Others claim alleviating poverty and protecting the vulnerable is the most important work Christians do. Most of us know the answer isn’t either/or, but what’s the proper balance? And are we anywhere near living out that balance?

Warning! Daylight time begins this morning.

### Holy Week

March 16—Palm Sunday: We begin “Holy Week” today with palms and loud “hosannas,” even as Scripture and song begin asking us “where is all this going to lead?”

March 20—7:00 pm: Maundy Thursday. “Is It I, Lord?” – A Maundy Thursday presentation dramatizing Leonardo DaVinci’s “Last Supper.” Holy Communion will also be served tonight.

March 21—7:00 pm: Good Friday. A meditative and moving service shaped around the famous “Seven Last Words of Christ.”

March 23—Easter Sunday: Three services of worship celebrate our Lord’s Resurrection. Sunrise Service (6 am) led by our youth in our Butterfly Garden with breakfast to follow; Worship Services at 8:30 and 11:00 am in the sanctuary with Choir and Brass Ensemble. Read: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; and John 20:1-18

## Children’s Mission Projects

As you are well aware, the children are a vital part of our church’s ministry. With that in mind, we have a couple of new mission programs that involve the children here at church and in the community. The first was introduced by Bonnie Blair, a relatively new member of LUMC, and the program is **K.A.N.—Kids in Action Now**. Here’s how Bonnie describes K.A.N.

“What words would you use to describe our 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders here at Lansing UMC? Words or phrases that immediately leap to mind are:

- “Energetic,”
- “Enthusiastic,”
- “Generous,”
- “Kind-hearted,”
- “Thoughtful,”
- “Caring,” and
- “Eager to serve and be involved.”

Experience teaches that kids this age can do phenomenal things, whenever we ask them to become involved in helping others.

What do you think would happen if we unleashed these caring souls on the helping ministries of our church? That’s exactly what we intend to do in a new program called **K.A.N.—Kids in Action Now**, slated for the beginning of the next school year. K.A.N. is designed to channel the boundless energy, enthusiasm, and drive that our young people have to help others in support for *ongoing* outreach ministries at our church. Each month, the group will learn about a program our church supports and complete a project to help out with that ministry. We’ll be combining that with some fun too! J

K.A.N. will allow kids to contribute while developing what we hope will be a lifelong understanding of outreach programs and possibilities within the church. An added benefit will be getting to know the adults in our church who are dedicated to making these helping programs work. These young people are at the perfect age to catch on fire with

our Wesleyan heritage of reaching out to those in need, and we’re very excited to offer them this opportunity to experience the joy of serving Christ in our world.

Look for notice of an orientation meeting scheduled later this Spring for parents and current 2nd-4th graders interested in learning more about K.A.N. and shaping how to best implement this program at Lansing U.M.C”.

The other new program is the **Bright Red Bookshelf**. The **Bright Red Bookshelf** is a program sponsored by the Family Reading Partnership that circulates gently used children’s books. Books collected are used throughout the county at the Bright Red Bookshelf sites including the newest site, which is the Lansing Food Pantry at LUMC. Lansing Food Pantry participants will be able to visit the red bookshelf and select books to bring home for their children. How can you help? Periodically we will place a basket in the narthex where you will be able to donate children’s books. We will introduce the Bright Red Bookshelf program at **Faith in Books Weekend** on *Sunday, March 2*. Faith in Books Weekend is sponsored by Area Congregations Together and the Family Reading Partnership. So far, over a ten year period, Faith in Books has collected a total of 10,750 gently used children’s books! Judy Hinderliter will oversee this mission project at church.

Many good mission projects begin right here at home and we welcome your participation in them.—*Marilyn Paradise*

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>2 ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING Worship 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship 11:00 Children's Musical Rehearsal 12:00 Children's Ministry 12:00 Bible Study 6:00 Jr. High Egg Hunt 7:00</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 Quilt Bee 9:30  Staff Parish 7:00</p>	<p>5 Women's Bible Study 9:30 M.O.P.S. 10:00  Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p>	<p>6  Senior High Gathering 7:00</p>	<p>7  WORLD DAY OF PRAYER  Senior High Dinner and Brigadoon</p>	<p>1 Mens' Breakfast every Saturday Confirmation Retreat  8 Reminder: Daylight time begins 2:00 AM, March 9. Set your clocks ahead tonight.</p>
<p>9 FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT Worship 8:30 DAY-LIGHT Sunday School 9:45 TIME Worship 11:00 Food Pantry Setup Children's Musical Rehearsal 12:00 Confirmation Bible Study 4:00 Bible Study 6:00</p>	<p>10  Food Pantry 4:00</p>	<p>11 Quilt Bee 9:30</p>	<p>12 Women's Bible Study 9:30  Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p>	<p>13 Men's Group 10:00  Senior High Gathering 7:00 Trustees 7:30</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 Mens' Breakfast Linda's in North Lansing 7:00 Blood Drive 8:30 Sr. High Egg Decorating 1:00 SUNBEAM DEADLINE 12:00 Midnight</p>
<p>16 PALM SUNDAY Worship 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship 11:00  Children's Musical Rehearsal 12:00 Confirmation Bible Study 4:00 Bible Study 6:00</p>	<p>17  Haiti 7:00</p>	<p>18 Quilt Bee 9:30  Membership 7:00</p>	<p>19 Women's Bible Study 9:30 M.O.P.S. 10:00  Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00 Finance 7:30</p>	<p>20 MAUNDY THURSDAY  Is It I, Lord? Dramatic presentation and communion 7:00</p>	<p>21 GOOD FRIDAY  Worship 7:00</p>	<p>22 Mens' Breakfast Linda's in North Lansing 7:00</p>
<p>23 EASTER! Christ Is Risen! Sunrise Service 6:00 Worship 8:30 Worship 11:00  Bible Study 6:00</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 Quilt Bee 9:30</p>	<p>26 Women's Bible Study 9:30  Bells Angels 6:00 Choir 7:00</p>	<p>27  Senior High Gathering 7:00</p>	<p>28  CCYM Retreat</p>	<p>29 Mens' Breakfast Linda's in North Lansing 7:00</p>
<p>30 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EASTER Worship 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship 11:00 Junior Choir 12:00 Children's Musical Rehearsal 12:00 Confirmation Bible Study Bible Study 6:00</p>	<p>31 Mobile Food Pantry 10:00</p>	<p>Note: This calendar is current as of February 20. For updates to all LUMC events, visit <a href="http://lansingunited.org">lansingunited.org</a> to see our virtual church calendar, and check the bulletin when you're in church on Sunday.</p>			 <p>Lansing united methodist church</p>	<p>March 2008</p>



## Dreams, Disappointments, and God's Timing

Why is it we Christians always seem to be amazed—actually surprised—when God steps into our lives and performs a miracle or when He answers a prayer we have offered up to Him? Why is it we can repeatedly read and study the Gospels, being reminded of how Jesus chose 12 unlikely men from a broad spectrum of life and careers, with no particular notoriety, and fashioned them into His apostles to shepherd His sheep, establish His church, and forever change the course of humankind, and still be shocked when we see Him doing unbelievable things in our own present-day experiences? This God, who we know in our hearts is who He says He is and can do what He says He can do, still causes us to be surprised and amazed when we actually witness His intercession in our lives.

This is exactly what the people working on the Banique Team of the Haiti Committee have just recently found themselves experiencing—a feeling of surprise and amazement and, of course, extreme gratitude. God stepped in—He opened doors, He provided workers, and He allowed something to happen that reaffirmed His plan for our work and dreams in Banique. In many ways the dynamics of the people on the Haiti Committee resemble that of those first 12 followers of Christ—we span a broad spectrum of careers and life experiences; we represent a mixed breadth of spiritual experiences; we have varying and sometimes conflicting views on issues, and are in complete agreement that none of us has a personal claim to fame. Yet God is using us to fulfill His plan while the dreams He planted in our hearts are becoming a reality.

In 2003 we believed in our dreams, encompassed these dreams with prayer, and expected great things to happen. Instead we were met with disappointment. We assumed our dreams of a Haitian hillside, rich with vegetation to impede erosion and in turn saving the integrity of a school and a church while simultaneously becoming a source of food for the poor people of Banique, would be embraced by the church leaders and community. How could this not be a plan that God would bless? However, when we were met with disappointment and apparent failure, we looked for all of the ways that we might have done things differently. Disappointment set in and took root. We were ready to give up and move to another location in Haiti. We felt let down, unappreciated, and frustrated—all of which centered more on our feelings and less on God's input. In retrospect we can now see that God's plan and His timeline needed only for us to trust in His faithfulness.

God had a plan that would include a wonderful Haitian gentleman by the name of Jean Michel Basquin, who was studying to receive a Ph.D. in rural and community development in the U.S. when this agriculture project was just beginning in Banique. God knew Jean Michel would be an integral part of this plan so He put the project "on hold" while Jean finished his degree and returned to Haiti. Through a series of what might be seen as "happenstance" or "coincidences" to some but what God would see as "His Plan," Jean Michel was hired by the Haitian Methodist

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## Haiti Mission (continued)

Church to oversee community development and environmental enhancement through the Haitian Methodist churches and schools. In January 2007, upon hearing for the first time about the attempted work on the hillside behind the school in Banique, Jean Michel was overwhelmed. Never having heard about this Haiti Committee from far-away Lansing, he could not believe these teams had engaged the knowledge and expertise of agriculturalists, engineers, environmentalists, horticulturists, and many willing and able bodies in an attempt to make this hillside hope a reality. Knowledge of this attempted project inspired Jean Michel to actively and enthusiastically go to work developing a plan that would embrace this dream and bring to reality his vision and ours. He could envision things that were still only dreams for us—dreams in fact that had been met with severe disappointment. Through the eyes of this knowledgeable and visionary Haitian Christian man, we are seeing a dream become a reality that goes far beyond our original goals.

Jean Michel plans to use this hillside in Banique as a prototype for other such areas throughout Haiti. This would include educating the Haitian youth in the areas of horticulture and agriculture by making this a mandatory part of their school curriculum—much like the U.S. version of FFA. Using his education and influence within the Haitian Methodist Church, he will be able to gain resources, open doors, and make connections that we were unable to achieve. He has already developed a six-page proposal which will include educating the teachers, restructuring the hillside, and providing the resources needed to get this project started. He plans to put into place a program where the



Reenie Sandsted works with Banique residents to plant mango trees donated by a member of the Banique Methodist Church.

students in the school, as well as the adults in the Methodist church (and hopefully the entire community), will work together to allow this hillside to avoid further erosion and grow produce. His proposal goes even beyond the hillside to further agricultural practices, learned within the school curriculum, that will allow this village to be have a sustainable project and perhaps even economic gains. Jean Michel dreams big—and we are now sure that God does too!

While Jean Michel is God's gift to us and a pathway to making our "dream" a reality, he sees everyone involved with this mission as God's gift to Haiti to make his dreams and

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## Haiti Mission (concluded)

vision for his homeland a reality. Somewhere in God's plan and His perfect timing, He placed in Banique, a small village in Haiti, an unlikely group of people from Lansing, New York, who had a heart for the people living there and a vision for their environment while at the same time preparing a young Haitian man, who was the first in his family to go to college, with an education, a heart for Haiti, and a vision for the environment. Then in His perfect timing, God caused the paths of these people to cross allowing dreams to become realities and His plan to be fulfilled. God's timing is always perfect.

As this project gets underway there will be opportunities for the people of LUMC and the other churches and individuals associated with the Haiti Committee to participate in the ongoing work and sustainability of this agricultural project in Banique. Willing hands, hearts of service, career expertise, and gifts of love through monetary donations will help to enhance and establish this project. God has provided, in His time, all that we need; now it is our turn to give back what we have to give."To whom much is given, much will be expected."

—*This article, although written by Dianne Walter in partnership with Reenie Sandsted, reflects the experiences of the members of the team that most recently returned from Banique, Haiti, January 12. These members included Dianne, Reenie, Sarah Sandsted, and Ashley Dean all of Lansing, as well as Regina and Reigan Robbins, Larry Anderson, and Mark Clifton all from Knoxville, Tennessee. Larry is the pastor and Mark the youth pastor at Regina's Methodist church in Knoxville.*

## Senior Gift

### Sharing Your Spiritual Journey with LUMC

#### Youth

I just wanted to remind the congregation that the Youth Ministry is preparing a book for our 11 graduating seniors. Whether your path after high school was work, military, college, or something else, everyone has valuable wisdom to share about what that transition was like, and we want YOURS! We strongly encourage you to write some uplifting anecdotes and words of wisdom, which we will bind together and give to our graduating seniors in June.

Your essay should be a minimum of 300 words, with no maximum if you'd like to write more. Please e-mail your entries to Kevin at [atkevin.t.dunn@gmail.com](mailto:atkevin.t.dunn@gmail.com), or place them in his folder near the church office. An accompanying photograph of you or your family would be appreciated so it can be placed next to your story (any photos of the church or church activities would be great as well! All photos will be scanned and given back to you). We would like these entries by the first week of April so we have time to proofread/edit and get them printed and shipped. Thank you so much - we are hoping that this will be a great tool for our graduating seniors to use in the next step in their lives.

Some questions to get you started:

- What do you wish you knew when you were graduating high school that you didn't know then?
- What has God taught you since high school?
- How have you grown closer to Him since high school?
- What does every student need to know about college life?
- How did your faith survive (or get stronger) in college?

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## Information Regarding the Church Website

Through a free and useful utility, we are now able to track our website traffic. I thought I'd share some of this information with you.

### Who is looking at our website? (we hope you are)

Since instituting the tracking utility in the second week of September, we have had 1,436 visits to our website (as of 02/11/08), averaging 9.3 visits per day. These visitors have come from 8 countries, 30 states, and 49 cities within New York (166 separate locations in all). The overwhelming amount of traffic is from the greater Ithaca area, which accounts for 64% of our page views. Almost all of our visitors (94%) use a high-speed internet connection to access our site.

### How did people get to our website?

Sixty-four percent of traffic is direct traffic, meaning people went to [www.lansingunited.org](http://www.lansingunited.org) or [home.twny.rr.com/lumc/](http://home.twny.rr.com/lumc/) on their own. Following that, 16.7% of traffic is from searches through Google, 6.6% from The Lansing Star Online, and the remaining 12.7% is from other search engines and mostly United Methodist-affiliated websites. Search terms that have led people to LUMC's site have been as vague as "churches", as specific

### Spiritual Journey (concluded)

What advice of God's do you wish you had followed at a younger age?  
Do you have a story or series of events that illustrates a Biblical principle?

If you are a teenager, and especially if you are a senior and happen to be reading this, please don't spoil the surprise for your peers!—*Kevin Dunn, Coordinator of Youth Ministries*

as "lansing united methodist church, lansing, ny", and as in between as "lansing united methodist church" (which helps to explain all the visitors from Michigan). Here's an interesting note: four or five people have found our site by seeking information regarding the Rummage Sale.

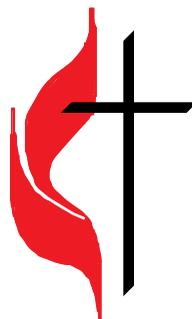
### What are people looking at on our website?

Most visitors to our website leave after viewing the main page. I believe that this trend can be explained by two main reasons: (1) the main page contained information they were seeking, such as worship times, or (2) the LUMC website was not what they were looking for. If visitors go past the main page, they stay an average of 1:25 minutes, and visit the Youth section, Contact Information, Programs, and Directions.

The church website contains links to the master church calendar, previous issues of the Sunbeam, Pastor Bill's weblog ("blog"), information regarding LUMC programs, and the Youth blog with event information and more. As more people depend on the internet for information, our website presence must continue to be inviting and informative. A website is often viewed as the public face of a company or organization, and LUMC's is no exception; what message are we sending with ours? Any questions, comments, concerns, or fears regarding the website can be directed to [kevin.t.dunn@gmail.com](mailto:kevin.t.dunn@gmail.com).—*Kevin Dunn, Coordinator of Youth Ministries*

### Altar Flowers

Please consider choosing a Sunday to celebrate an occasion in your life by putting a flower arrangement on the altar. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. Your generosity would be much appreciated. Please contact Lou Barr, 257-0731, or Joyce Henniger, 533-7592, with any questions.



# The Sunbeam

March 2008

*Lansing United  
Methodist  
Church*

**Palm Sunday**

**March 16**

**Maundy Thursday, March 20**

**Is It I, Lord?**

**7:00**

**Good Friday, March 21**

**7:00**

**Easter, March 23**

**6:00, 8:30, 11:00**

## ***Lansing United Methodist Church***

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**T**he Sunbeam is published each month by  
Lansing United Methodist Church.

Please send your news to Glenn Withiam, editor,  
at [grw4@cornell.edu](mailto:grw4@cornell.edu), or use the Sunbeam folder  
by the church office.

Deadline for the next issue is March 15, 2008.