

# United Parish of Bowie

**United in Christ—Our Mission: To Serve**  
Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

FALL 2011  
NEWSLETTER



## Fruit

(adapted from the sermon preached 7/31/11 at UPB )

All week long at Art and Music camp, we talked about the fruit of the Spirit. I can practically still hear the theme song reverberating through the halls of the church and through my head...

*"The fruit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control; love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control"*

In Galatians 5, Paul starts off talking about freedom. He says that Christ set us free and we can do whatever we want to do with that freedom. He goes on to sum up all of the ethical teachings of the Bible like this: "love your neighbor as yourself." He lists out a lot of unhelpful and unhealthy behaviors that might come up if we choose to do whatever we feel like doing without thinking about others and he urges us to consider the fruit of the Spirit a source of guidance when we think about what it is that we actually want to do... and wouldn't it be nice if we could live by the fruit the Spirit produces in us?

Well, for the week of our first ever Art and Music camp at UPB, we tried. We tried to live the fruit (and teach them) and there were lots of ways we succeeded. There were also a few times where we saw just how hard it is to be fruitful. At camp I was convinced that every set of siblings struggles with kindness toward each other occasionally and I learned that sometimes three year olds can have as much patience as I do (and vice versa). There were only a few moments between 9 o'clock and noon on any day of the week that had any semblance of peace... and even though we only had one real injury there were plenty of times when I wondered if the lesson on gentleness and self-control even stood a chance. But even during those times when the fruit of the Spirit wasn't 100% immediately evident, it was still clear to me that we were on the right track because joy and love were in abundance.

I can't count how many parents expressed their thanks for the activity and the friendship and the fun that the United Parish provided for the community. I can't count how many hugs and high fives and beaming smiles I received... and I was only one of the twenty adults who spent the week with these kids... And what a wonderful thing it was to have the kind of laughter and energy and joyfulness that comes from 40 kiddos running around and singing and dancing and playing together. And it was only when I stopped to think about the whole camp experience on Friday afternoon that I realized just maybe, those kiddos were the ones who were here to teach us about the fruit of the Spirit at least as much as we were here to teach them. The Spirit of Christ is at work in all of us. What Jesus did in his teaching and what he did with his life was done for everyone. It's because of that, the fruit of the Spirit isn't something we create as if we're an artist doing an art project... We are the art project; each of us is part of

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## Fruit, cont.

it... and the fruit of the Spirit is what happens in us as God creates us and forms us into the image of Christ.

We can all strive after the fruit but when you want fruit, you don't plant fruit... you plant seeds... and as it turns out, the seeds that are able to be planted: the seeds that we trust will grow and eventually turn into the fruit of the Spirit are the evidence of the spirit working in us. The Spirit's work is contagious and perhaps the best part of Art and Music camp was

being around so many people who were committed to loving and serving one another. I'm grateful to everyone who helped me remember in the week of Art and Music camp that the Fruit of the spirit isn't just about what we do; it's about who we are as God's people.

In Christ,  
Pastor Dan

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## 2011 Ministry Evaluation

The results of our 2011 survey have been communicated to the Parish Board to assist it in conducting its annual evaluation of our ministry.

Following are category averages for pastor effectiveness, based on a 4.0 rating scale: Preaching and Worship, 3.57; Pastoral Care and Ministry, 3.80; Evangelism/Outreach/Service, 3.55; Administration and Organization, 3.77; Personal Characteristics, 3.90.

The correspondence between perceived importance of pastoral performance categories and how effectively their specific functions are performed continues to be very high; in fact, this year the rankings are identical. Personal Characteristics ranks the highest on both importance and effectiveness; Pastoral Care and Ministry ranks second highest on both; Administration and Organization ranks third highest on both; Preaching and Worship, fourth highest; Service, Evangelism, and Outreach receives the lowest rank on both importance and effectiveness. It should be noted the rating averages only vary by three decimal points from the highest to the lowest categories on importance and by four decimal points on effectiveness.

The evaluation instrument also included ratings of how well the Board performed its various duties and how well the congregation is meeting its three stated goals. The overall effectiveness rating for the Board,

averaged over nine items, is 3.67.

The effectiveness results for the Parish Goals are given below:

- Being a community of believers who are growing spiritually, 3.45;
- Being committed to local service and worldwide mission, 3.36;
- Increasing active participation in life and ministry of UPB, 3.33

The compiled results for the last three years are also available; please contact Pastor Dan if you wish to look at these data.

Finally, we are able to report that 14 of 15 persons returned their surveys this summer, giving us a three-year response total of 42 out of 45 surveys sent—an extremely high return rate. Our thanks go out to all of you who completed the task of filling out the questionnaires. Inasmuch as we have now surveyed persons in the vast majority of member households, we are in the process of moving in a different direction for 2012.

Doug Snyder for the Ministry Review Team: Kathy Busch, Herb Sheppard, Dan Holland, Elsie Carroll, and Dave Fischvogt.



## United Parish of Bowie: Spring 2011





## Power to Persevere

It was mid-morning and one lone adult was swimming laps while young kids screeched, ran, jumped and splashed when firing their water guns. A parent challenged one of the boys to swim the length of the pool on one breath. One of the children not participating in the water gun battle quietly decided to take the challenge, never having accomplished such a feat. Lowering her head with commitment, she glided through the water with even strokes and without struggle. She surprised herself at being able to swim the length without needing to take a breath. She was thrilled and decided to try it again. Methodically and rhythmically she swam the length without having to breathe until she reached the other side. Feeling quite accomplished now, she decided to try again to reach her goal of swimming the length on one breath. It was not until the fourth attempt to swim the length that she had to rest her legs and lungs to catch a breath before reaching the other side of the pool. But she was exhilarated because she had set her goal and accomplished more than she had even dreamed she could do.

As adults we know that there are many benefits from practicing perseverance. However, we need more than an “I can do” spirit. With what kind of power do we persevere? In September, we may sense some excitement as we start with a partially clean slate to visualize what we wish to accomplish in the months ahead of us. We know from past experience that if we stay focused and work very hard we should be able to reach some of these goals. We also know that many of our past aims were not reached without roadblocks or unexpected events. Some of us have lost our jobs, our homes, our savings or maybe our health insurance. With what attitude do we encounter these setbacks or problems or sufferings? Is there some kind of spiritual resource that would gird us for facing whatever the future holds?

Even though I can't remember life without God and going to worship, I learned very early what it means to trust in Jesus. My dad died from a brain tumor when I was thirteen and family dreams were shattered. I experienced then what it means to trust Jesus Christ to be with us everyday wherever we go. None of us knows what tomorrow or even the next hour will bring. We do not want to be overcome by fear or anxiety. Amidst our problems, we want to persevere, to have hope and strength. Like a child who cries for comfort and courage when lightning streaks the sky and thunder shakes the child's sense of well-being, we turn to Christ to strengthen us and empower us to face whatever accomplishments or problems or sufferings may unfold. Can we affirm with Paul in Philippians “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me?” What a way to begin September! What a way to persevere!

Shirley Klotz Bickel, © 2011





## Get to Know UPB: Alec Burgess, Communications Committee Chair

1. Please give a brief bio of yourself. *Bio begins: born to parents, with sisters and brother. Got older, married, with 2 kids who are getting older themselves. Bio continues to grow...*

2. How long have you been a member at UPB?

*That's a good one. I don't exactly know when I got my UPB membership card but I am pretty sure it was on a Sunday. Maybe Robin remembers - she was there. (Robin interjecting: since 2001)*

3. What makes you excited about taking on the chair position of your ministry area for the coming year?

*Ha! Talk about excited - it was an honor just to be nominated!*

4. What is your earliest memory of being at a church?

*I think it was when my brother and I got caught trying to line our jacket pockets with plastic wrap (in the pre-Saran days) so Chat -n- Chew could continue all the way home.*

5. How did you find UPB? *It certainly wasn't easy as it is NOT on Church Road like I thought it was.*

6. What led you to become a member? *Actually, we had decided to make finding a church home a priority.*

*Then Carl O. Bickel found us and hung onto us as "live ones," so what could we do?*

7. What led to you becoming a committee chair? *I think part of it was the talented, creative, qualified people opted to say "no, thanks" this time. Equally as important, we like to eat on this committee and I wanted to see that tradition continue.*

8. What's something about you that most people don't know? *Like what? I doubt there is much else anybody would want to know, but if there is - just ask me.*

- Alec

## Communications Committee

We thank Rebecca Holland for leading the Communications Committee this past year. Under her care, we made great strides in all areas of communication and identified more opportunities to explore. As Rebecca answers the call to co-chair the Children, Youth and Family Committee, we welcome Alec Burgess as the new Chair. If you think you would like to be a part of this journey, please see Alec.

As your Communications and Coordination Committee moves forward this year, the mission remains the same: to ensure your projects have the visibility and support they need to be successful via timely updates to bulletins, website, special notices, external announcements and quarterly newsletters. As proof that time is indeed moving faster, the deadline for the Winter 2011 newsletter is just around the corner (November 1st).

One of Pastor Holland's concepts you will undoubtedly be hearing more about this year will involve "teaming". What exactly is teaming? Teaming focuses energy. Where Committees exist to plan and to dream up what a particular ministry area will look like, Teams exist to get things done. Teams are the "hands on" ministers. Teams give a place for people who aren't interested in meetings or aren't particularly gifted in the organizational aspects of congregational life to still be involved in the ministry of the church. Teams have a well defined task but may look different for different tasks... sometimes they will involve a months long commitment and formal training (volunteering with Sunday School), other times they may only last a morning and consist of whoever shows up that day (Work day or Christmas in April) and sometimes teams will exist to synergize the resources of multiple committees because the event they plan crosses the "neat lines" of the committees' work (Rally Day)... So think for a moment about what you love to do in ministry... then go find a team!

## Spiritual Formation Opportunities

### *Musical Opportunities*

Like to sing? Don't be shy!

The Adult Choir begins rehearsals on **Wednesday, August 24, 2011**. Rehearsals start at **7:30 pm** in the sanctuary. Come and join us as we share our talents in a special way to serve God and spread His word.



OK. So you don't think you can sing. How about playing a musical instrument? We are looking for any one of any age who might like to begin playing chimes. You have

seen some of our kids do it. You can join them! A survey will be available on Rally Sunday. You can let us know when you might be available to practice. You do not need to know how to read music, but you do need to be committed to coming to rehearsals.

### *Adult Education*

Since Bible Study was one of the most asked for topics in the recent Adult Education Survey and Unity in Christ is part of the mission of the United Parish, both the Christian Spiritual Formation and the Children Youth and Family Committees have decided to offer lectionary based Bible studies as part of the curriculum for the year. The Adult Education team has chosen *Feasting on the Word* and Bill Collins will coordinate the first four week segment from **September 18th through October 9th**. Each class stands alone but also the relationships built among the participants will continue to build from week to week. So come check it out!

**November 6th, 13th, & 20th:** Shirley Bickel will use the text *What Good Is God?* by Philip Yancey to spark discussion of this provoking topic.

Adult classes will be on Sundays from 9:45-10:45am. Child care is available for those with young children.

There will **not** be Adult Education on **October 30th** – Consecration Sunday or **November 27th** – Thanksgiving Weekend.



The A discussion has begun at UPB regarding children receiving the sacrament of communion. We want to hear your thoughts and opinions. There will be an open forum discussion after worship on October 9th and then an adult education course on the meaning of Communion on October 16 and 23 that will be led by Pastor Dan.

### Get Published!

The deadline for the Winter 2011 UPB Newsletter is November 1st. Please submit your committee announcements, photos, articles, etc. to [upbannounce@gmail.com](mailto:upbannounce@gmail.com)



It's once again time to Rally for the beginning of the program year! Rally Day will be September 11th this year.

We will commission the Committee chairs in the worship service at 11 am and celebrate the beginning of the program year at the church with an all church picnic and ministry fair after the service. Come worship together, enjoy food and fellowship and find out what's going on for the 2011-12 program year at UPB.



## Children, Youth and Family



### *Art and Music Camp*

Thank you to everyone who made the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Art and Music Camp a huge success! We had almost 40 students attend the weeklong camp, having fun learning about the fruit of the spirit while rotating through art, games, music, and drama stations.

Thank you to our wonderful volunteer team: Dina Bickel, Nancy Brozowski, Marva Connelly, Nancy Crisler, Becky DeMeo, Pearl Donovan, Diane Eades, Amy Fuqua, Robbie Fuqua, Megan Fuqua, Dan Holland, Rebecca Holland, Sue Kennedy, Jennifer Monath, Katie Murphy, Julissa Orta, Luis Orta, Janice Shepherd, Art Swanson and Conor Yates-Gregory.

### *CYF Teams*

Teams are forming to run the 2011-2012 Children, Youth, and Family Programs! Please contact Rebecca Holland if you are interested in being a part of any of the following teams: Sunday Morning Nursery, Preschool-Kindergarten Sunday School, 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Sunday School, 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Sunday School, Seeds Wednesday Family Program, or Youth Group/Mentoring. As a member of a team, you would attend the Fall CYF volunteer training from 11 to 2 pm on Sunday August 28<sup>th</sup> and then be part of a team rotation, volunteering about once monthly with your group. All you have to have is a love of God and a love of working with students – we will train you, provide curriculum, and provide supplies!

### *Fall SEEDS*

Fall SEEDS begins Wednesday September 14<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 7 pm and will continue every Wednesday through November 16<sup>th</sup>. It's a great time for families to come together to enjoy food, fun, and worship!

### *Sunday School*

Sunday School classes will kick off on Sunday September 18<sup>th</sup>! Students will attend the beginning of worship before heading to class. This year the children will be dismissed from the service to head off to Sunday school and they will be using the We Believe Curriculum. We hope to have three groups: a preschool to kindergarten class, a 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade class, and a 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade class. The number of classes is dependent on the number of volunteers we have so please let us know if you or anyone you know might be interested in being a part of one of the Sunday School teams.

### *Youth*

The UPB Youth will be meeting on Wednesday nights from 6 to 7 pm starting September 14<sup>th</sup> through November 16<sup>th</sup>. They will share in the Seeds meals before enjoying a time of fellowship.



## Mission and Service Committee

### *Operation Backpack 2011*



*Helping children go back to school in confidence!*

With the generous support of the congregation, UPB filled seven backpacks full of school supplies to support Central Union Mission's annual initiative to provide over 1,200 backpacks to the children in need in our Nation's Capital. Thank you for supporting this initiative either by purchasing a backpack and/or school supplies or by making a monetary donation towards the cause. The donations allowed us to purchase needed items and some optional items on the High School listing. The extra school supplies will be donated to the Family Crisis Center to support the children there so they can also return to school equipped for learning. Remember to pray for these children and all children who are returning to school.

### *Family Crisis Center-Themed Meals!*



For years on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, we have provided meals to the Family Crisis Center (safe house for victims of abuse, and the primary service provider to families experiencing domestic violence in Prince George's County). One thing is for sure, UPB has some amazing cooks and bakers and that is why the Committee has decided to challenge you by creating a theme to the meals each month and ask those who sign up to bring a dish corresponding to the theme. We will do this on a trial basis and solicit feedback! Here are the themes for the upcoming months:

September-Tailgate to kick-off football season

October-Fall or Autumn

November-Thanksgiving Feast

So start thinking about your favorite recipes and remember what a blessing our meals are to the women and children at the Crisis Center!

### *Operation Christmas Child (OCC)*

This is a great time to start picking up small items to fill the shoe boxes for OCC! Through gift-filled shoeboxes we are able to help bring joy and hope to children in desperate situations worldwide and tell the Good News of God's love.

### *Central Union Mission*

*Operation Christmas Miracle aka "Christmas Bag" Service Project is Back!*

UPB will participate by purchasing gifts for 10 children for the 2011 Christmas gift distribution. The committee also agreed to coordinate attendance at the gift distribution on December 10, 2011. Check the bulletin for more information on this opportunity in the near future.

### *Bowie Interfaith Pantry*

Please continue to bring non-perishable food donations for the pantry. You may also drop fresh produce – vegetables, fruits from your gardens or local markets directly at the pantry on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 9:00-11:00 am.



## Mission and Service Committee, continued

### *Financial Support for Local, Regional, and Global Needs*

The Committee also looks at providing financial support to activities outside the church.

This year, the Committee selected two organizations to support financially. From our Committee's budget, the Committee has designated \$300 to be donated to Shaw Community Ministry (SCM) and \$300 to the Bowie Interfaith Pantry (which distributes food to local needy families) and Emergency Aid Fund (which provides help with housing-related expenses such as rent and utilities). SCM's mission is to enhance lives and expand the opportunities of children, youth, adults and seniors of the Shaw community. We plan to invite Rev Anne Troy, Executive Director, Shaw Ministry to visit UPB to talk with our committee and the congregation about the organization and the support they provide.

### *Living Waters for the World*

During the 2010-2011 Sunday School year, the Christian Education classes along with the congregation's support collected \$121.41 for this worthwhile cause to bring clean drinking water to all God's children. It is wonderful to

get our children involved and help them to understand the importance of giving, loving, and serving others. Please look for the bottles to return in the fall when Sunday School classes resume.



C. Sree Kumar



R. Rathika



S. Hemalatha



P. Siva

### **SOTI**

SOTI has sponsored one physically and three visually handicapped students for graduate training (Bachelor of Education) to become High School Teachers in India. Sree Kumar (28 yrs.), Rathika (26 yrs.), Hemalatha (28 yrs.) and Siva (23 yrs. ) will start their training in August this year and will graduate in July 2012. United Parish's contribution of \$1,069 went a long way to enable SOTI to meet the full cost of \$3,400 to support these students to become productive citizens. Thank you for your support!

## Membership and Fellowship

### *Book Club*

We are meeting September 30th at the Barbato's house to discuss *Devil in a White City*, by Erik Larson and will make future selections at that time.

### *Stewardship*

This year the month of October is Stewardship month at UPB. We will look at what it means to be good stewards of gifts God has given us: Creation, Time, Finances, Relationships and a variety of other arenas of our lives. October 30th will be Consecration Sunday when we are asked to pledge our financial support for the 2012 calendar year.

### *Thanksgiving Sunday*

Plan to join the UPB Community to celebrate God's faithfulness with a service of Thanksgiving on Nov. 20th, the Sunday before the Thanksgiving Holiday.

*Mark your calendars!*

*Fall Clean Up Day*

Oct. 25th (Raindate: Nov. 5th) at 9am. Please bring your favorite gardening tools.



### *Fall Leadership Retreat*

Keep an eye out for more information!

Fall 2011

**11am Worship resumes Sept. 4th**

Nursery Care Available for Infants and Young Children

Sunday School Available for Preschool to Elementary Children

***Rally Day***  
*September 11th, 2011 at*  
*11am*



*All are welcome*

*as we kick-off the program year with a church picnic and booths  
with information about UPB's committees and programs for all!*

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Address Correction Requested