

## Special points of interest:

- Intentional Interim Ministry Update
- Art & Music Camp Recap
- Watato Children's Choir
- Our Mission and Service Opportunities
- "Stunted Growth" by Shirley Klotz Bickel
- Encountering Philipians

## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JERI

### INTENTIONAL INTERIM MINISTRY UPDATE

*<sup>41</sup> So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. <sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. ~ Acts 2:41-47*

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March 14 of this year, I became your Interim Minister. During these last few months I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you and being able to serve alongside you in various areas of ministry. I am impressed with your church leaders and your level of commitment to be the church, expressing your love for Jesus Christ.

When I first arrived I was told you are a warm and caring congregation. How very true! I have observed this in the way you have welcomed me and in the ways you embrace visitors. You care deeply for one another and lend support to those in need. You obviously enjoy being with one another and laugh often. Sharing such attributes of hospitality is vital to the health of any congregation.

Since March you have received seven new members, one through adult baptism. Might there soon be others who will become members? As important as it is to receive new members, it is perhaps even more important to assimilate into the life of the congregation those recently received into membership. This is often done with personal invitations to church related activities, inviting them to go out for a cup of coffee or a meal, and encouraging them to join you in any number of ministry opportunities at the church. In doing so you are helping to build up future leaders.

Mission is very important to you and you participate in several local, regional and global activities as you reach out to those in need. You are open to serving in a variety of ways and do so with love and compassion and commitment.

Children are valued and are a part of worship. This summer you enjoyed an exemplary Art and Music Camp and from that experience you now have your first ever YouTube posted on the Internet. Seeds of Worship helps prepare children to be engaged appropriately in worship. Christian spiritual formation is an emphasis for children of all ages – from the womb to the tomb. So important is your faith development that beginning on September 16, you will move to Sunday School/ Christian Education for all ages at 9:30 and worship at 10:45. You hired a part time nursery attendant.

Improving ways to increase communication within the church and beyond is taken seriously. You have a website that is kept up-to-date, bright new banners, and a professional looking newsletter. You are encouraged to LIKE US on FACEBOOK.

*Continued on page 2*

## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JERI, *continued*

Articles are regularly published in the local newspapers and the Bowie PATCH. A weekly news update is sent electronically and distributed to those without computer access. Flyers for special events are posted throughout the community and there have been positive responses to doing so. For example: two people from the community attended a Bible Study class offered on Monday afternoon and again in the evening; a family signed up for the Summer Camp; and people have come to visit because they were aware of UPB through various modes of communication.

Financially you are solvent and presently you are meeting all your financial obligations with a little to spare.

Fellowship opportunities engage people in a variety of activities. You reinstituted a talent show and all ages shared their gifts. You have a quality music program and worship is important to you. You take good care of your property and grounds. Members helped to rearrange the office and windows were inserted in the office doors. You celebrated your 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary and continue to be a light to those around you. For all this and much more....GOD BLESS YOU and a sincere thank you for all your support.

As you may recall, one of the goals of interim ministry is to help you look at yourself in a mirror. What do you see? What do you like? What do you wish were different? What do you value? What is important to you and why? How does what you are doing fit into your mission statement? Or does it?

Already the Board and Committee Chairs have participated in the Bullard Inventory that assesses through the eyes of 15 church leaders the level or readiness to face the challenges that lie ahead during times of transition. There were no real surprises as the results indicate your leadership is willing to take the necessary steps to move forward. This survey is offered by National Capital Presbytery. You will hear more specifics about the results in the weeks ahead.

The Board has engaged in some discussions about church growth and what it might mean to intentionally grow. This is a conversation carried forward from your last time of pastoral transition.

The demographics are being studied with the hopes of finding some better resources than what has thus far been made available. A history of financial giving will be completed in the near future. The Board is reviewing policies and ascertaining where additional ones might be considered.

You underwent an in-depth study of spiritual formation and your involvement in attending the PowerPoint presentations to discuss how best to address the needs for worship and spiritual formation that were held during June were well attended. Your input is appreciated and helped in the prayerful discernment process to make the necessary changes to ensure opportunities for all to worship and learn are available.

During the month of July hymns were projected on a screen to assess the value of increased technology as a way to worship. Your responses to a survey will soon be shared with you and will be part of the mission study.

You work well together, play together, pray together, and even shed tears together. You love the LORD!

So, where do we go from here? Soon you will hear information about completing a mission study. Your input into this study will help to further define who you are and hope to be as a congregation living into your mission statement: United in Christ – Our Mission to serve.

Once the mission study is completed then a Pastor Nominating Committee will be elected and the call process to identify your next installed pastor will begin.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss any aspects of the church with me, please let me know. Meanwhile,

**YOU ARE INVITED**

to be a part of a group where Christ is the center of all we do.

**YOU ARE INVITED**

to come hear and learn about the powerful stories of God's love and faithfulness.

**YOU ARE INVITED**

to share these extraordinary adventures with your family and friends.

*Grace and peace and an abundance of blessings for the journey.*

Pastor Jeri

## SUMMER 2012



## ART & MUSIC CAMP 2012



It was an amazing week at the United Parish, July 16-20 when we held our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Music and Art Camp! This year, we had over 50 children registered including those from the Joshua Treasure Camp. Our theme was "Clean Water for All God's Children" - Jesus Christ is living water for our bodies and our souls. We started each day with the song "Living Waters" and then had a visit from "Mr. Clean" and "Betsy What?" who helped introduce the water theme and Bible story that would be the focus for the day, as students rotated through the four stations: art, drama, games, and drama. At the end of the each morning, everyone would get back together, share what they had done at each station and then end with the song "Forever." A huge thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who helped to make the week a huge success: Dina Bickel, Shirley Bickel, Marva Connolly, Becky DeMeo, Pearl Donovan, Diane Eades, Jeri Fields, Sue Kennedy, Jemil Miller, Jenni Monath, Julissa Orta, Luis Orta, Kayla Sellers, Janice Sheppard, Sarah Thatcher, and Carol Zuber, along with all the staff and volunteers from the Joshua Treasure Camp under the direction of Pat Brown.

## FALL SEEDS

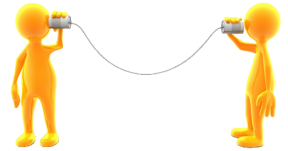
Fall SEEDS begins Wednesday, September 12 from 6 to

7:15 pm and will continue every Wednesday through October 24. Following dinner at 6:00, everyone gathers in the sanctuary for music, Bible stories, and games. It's a great time for families to come together to enjoy food, fun, and worship, so plan to attend. And if you would like to help by providing a meal, please speak to Pearl Donovan.



## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

What a summer! It wasn't that long ago no one knew what a Derecho was and now we have all lived through one.



Moving into Fall, we will be welcoming the new Christian Education year with new study and worship times and we can't wait to see the wonderful selections the Choir will bring to us on their triumphant return.

There are a lot of great opportunities to get involved: Mission and Service, Spiritual Formation, Children Youth and Families, etc. For a church of this size, we take on an impressive amount of projects. If you would like to get involved in a project, large or small, but don't know who to ask, the answer is simple - say it aloud in the narthex before or after the service and someone will find you!

Stay tuned for all the upcoming news as it comes out: in Jeri's weekly message, in the beginning of the Worship Service during announcement time and in the bulletin. If you know of someone who is absent or doesn't get the news electronically, please grab an extra bulletin and print a copy of the weekly messages for them to help us communicate the good news! And if you have an upcoming event you want to be publicized be sure to add a few lines about it to the UPB FaceBook page and for the bulletin a few weeks out. if you need help with this, please contact Robin.

So welcome All to Fall: exciting changes and opportunities and, hopefully, cooler weather!

## CHRISTMAS PLAY

Looking ahead to this special time of year, the children and youth will be presenting a

Christmas play on December 16 during worship. Practices will be on Wednesdays in place of SEEDS from November 7 to December 12. More information will be coming as plans are finalized, but mark you calendars now so that all our children and youth will be able to participate!



## ADULT CHOIR

Singers get ready! Adult Choir begins rehearsals on Wednesday, August 22, 2012 at 7:30 in the sanctuary. Be ready for uplifting and challenging music for this Fall. Our first Sunday to sing will be **Rally Sunday - September 9!**



We will rehearse on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 except for two schedule changes: Rehearsals will be on Tuesdays for Oct. 30 and Nov. 20. Please mark your calendars!

Bring a friend to choir – especially if they sing tenor or bass!

## RALLY SUNDAY

RALLY SUNDAY will be September 9. Dr. Keith plays with a Latin Ensemble and they will be playing on the lawn during the Rally Sunday picnic. Stay to sing, dance and enjoy the music!



## ADULT ED SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sept. 16, 23, 30: Feasting on the Word  
Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28: Study of Philippians  
Nov. 4, 11, 18: Feasting on the Word

Adult Ed. will be studying Philippians during the month of October. We hope you can see Stephen Trafton's performance. (See more information on page 8). Then we will look in depth into Philippians. We are continuing our lectionary series in September and November.

We are looking at several other books and DVDs for options in December and through the winter. If you have any suggestions, contact Bill or Diane.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS WANTED

With the new change in time for Sunday school come new opportunities for you to teach or assist in a classroom. If you are interested in being a part of the educational opportunities for children and/or youth, contact Julissa. If you would like to teach an adult Bible study contact Diane.

Former and present teachers are available to help you in a variety of ways to use your God-given gifts and abilities. Some commitments may be for a short period of time, other commitments may be longer. Some may want to be an assistant to get a feel for what it is like to teach children or adults.

If you feel God is calling you, and sometimes that begins with a nudge or an inner twinge, act upon it. If you would like to discuss your nudge or twinge with Pastor Jeri, please contact her.



At 6:00pm on December 16, we will welcome the Watoto Children's Choir from Uganda.

They will tell their stories through music and dance. The Watoto Children's Choirs have toured Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Israel, Brazil and the UK. A freewill offering will be taken during their performance. We will be looking for homes to help house the children and their leaders while they are here.

There will be much more information about how you can help with this wonderful event in the near future. In the meantime, visit [www.watoto.com](http://www.watoto.com) to learn more.

## MISSION AND SERVICE



### ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

#### Operation Backpack 2012—"Love your neighbor as yourself"

With the generous support of the congregation, UPB filled 10 (3 more than last year) 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. This year the committee chose to focus on the High School-aged students. 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 students UPB helped through this project will be filled with hope, joy, and excitement as they start the school year. Our support will provide these children the opportunity to start school with the tools to be successful.

#### Family Crisis Center-Themed Meals!

Look for the sign-up each month to prepare a portion of the meal at home to bring with you to church on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month for the Family Crisis Center (a safe house for victims of abuse, and the primary service provider to families experiencing domestic violence in Prince George's County). Planned themes:

August: Barbecue (chicken, ribs, pulled pork or chicken, coleslaw, corn on the cob, grilled vegetables)

September: Tailgate (chicken, burgers or sliders, wings, chili, potato salad, fruit salad)

October: Oktoberfest (bratwurst, knockwurst, cordon bleu, German potato salad, red cabbage, sauerkraut)

Our meals are a blessing to the women and children staying at the Crisis Center!



#### SAVE THE DATE FOR BOWIE'S CROP HUNGER Walk—SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2012!

*CROP Hunger Walks help children and families worldwide – and right here in the U.S. – to have food for today, while building for a better tomorrow. Our local efforts are making a huge difference... and you are part of it!*

### UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

#### Shaw Ministry Thanksgiving Day Baskets

While doing your grocery shopping, please keep your eye out for weekly specials and stock up now! UPB will



support Shaw Community Ministry (SCM) by purchasing nonperishable items such as corn, green beans, collard greens, sweet potatoes, mac and cheese, stuffing, turkey gravy, cornbread, cake mix, frosting, pie mix pie filling. Our support allows several families in the SCM community to prepare and serve their own Thanksgiving meals. Each year for over 20 years, SCM has provided 100-125 families with food and gift cards around the Thanksgiving holiday.



#### Central Union Mission-Operation Christmas Miracle aka "UPB Christmas Bag" Service Project!

UPB will participate by purchasing gifts for 10 children again this year for the 2012 Christmas gift distribution. 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. The Pantry's recent newsletter stated their greatest needs are:

SOUP—tomato, vegetable, beef,

## MISSION AND SERVICE

chicken, and cream soups

CANNED BEEF STEW

CANNED FRUIT

APPLESAUCE

You may also drop fresh produce – vegetables, fruits from your gardens or local markets directly at the pantry on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 9:00-11:00am, and the second Tuesday of each month between 6:00-7:00pm. <http://www.bowiefoodpantry.org/>

### 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 \$300.00 to support 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) and \$300.00 to support Doctors without Borders (Doctors and nurses volunteer to provide urgent medical care in countries to victims of war and disaster regardless of race, religion, or politics). <http://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/>

### Living Waters for the World

During the 2011-2012 Sunday School year and during the Art and Music Camp, the Christian Education classes along with the congregation's support collected change 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.

## Stunted Growth



Couldn't wait to bring this radiance home,  
tender creation ingeniously formed,  
Just the right size, robust and charming,  
sensitive to touch, dependent for care.  
"Gentle now, here's the best place."

There's so much advice. I am confused.  
Surely my efforts will foster blooms.

Days wash into months that push out to sea.  
Like a starfish my good intents pull me apart.  
My cherished one droops, no longer  
sparkles with luster.

Too much sun, then try the shade.

Too dry, then soak with water.

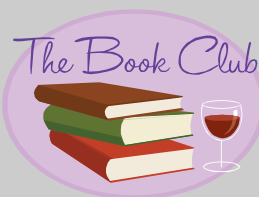
Growth is stunted. What have I done?

"Pick the essentials, prune and feed.

Then prune and feed," the Gardener confides.

"Seek Me and My design. Only I  
can rain enduring growth."

-Shirley Klotz Bickel, © 2012



*Our next UPB book club meeting will be September 7, 2012, 7pm at the Barbato home. At that time we will be discussing Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks. Anyone who would like to participate is encouraged to come and bring suggestions of books for the group to read. At this meeting we will be planning our books to read in the upcoming months. Meetings are usually held on the first Friday of the month.*

## The United Parish of Bowie

United in Christ Our Mission: To Serve

DON'T FORGET...



2515 Mitchellville Road  
(Corner of Mt. Oak and Mitchellville Roads)  
PO Box 1570  
Bowie, Maryland 20716  
Phone/Fax: 301-249-6411  
E-mail: [pastorjeri.upb@gmail.com](mailto:pastorjeri.upb@gmail.com)

Starting September 9  
Worship begins at 10:45 am

Visit us on the web!

[www.unitedparishbowie.org](http://www.unitedparishbowie.org)

Opt-Out: UPB's Use of Names and Images - While we never publish individual children's names without expressed parental consent, we do publish images of groups of children. In addition, at times we publish both names and images of individual adults, as well as groups. If you wish to not have any names or images for members of your family published, please contact Dina Bickel to opt-out of further publications.



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|---------------|---|
| September 9;  | Rally Sunday  |
| September 12: | Fall SEEDS begins at 6:00 pm  |
| September 16: | Church school begins for all ages at 9:30 am  |
| September 29: | Encountering Philippians performed by Stephen Trafton at 6:00 pm with desserts and finger foods |
| September 30: | Invite a friend to church   |
| October 7:    | World Communion Sunday<br>CROP Walk   |
| November 4:   | Consecration Sunday   |
| December 15:  | Greening of the church  |
| December 16:  | Christmas play at 10:45 am<br>Watoto Children's Choir at 6:00 pm                                |

### ENCOUNTERING PHILIPPIANS

Written and performed by Broadway actor Stephen Trafton  
Directed by Dan Roche

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!** On September 29, Stephen Trafton, a Broadway performer and nephew of Walter and Barbara Trafton, has written and will perform *Encountering Philippians* at 6:00pm at UPB. Stephen's monologue is a dynamic way of experiencing Paul's letters to the Philippians. We will have some light refreshments and desserts following the 45 minute performance. You will also have an opportunity to hear Stephen sing at Worship on Sunday morning. You won't want to miss it!

*"This is the most dynamic, informative way to experience this book I've ever seen. If you're looking for a way to make Philippians more than words on a page, if you're trying to understand it as the life-changing, challenging, revolutionary text that it is, I can't recommend 'Encountering Philippians' enough."*

—BEN JEFFREY, Broadway actor: Pumbaa in The Lion King