

United Parish of Bowie

United in Christ—Our Mission: To Serve

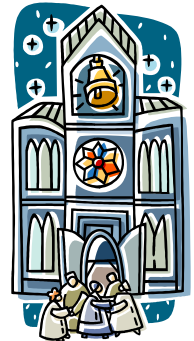
Presbyterian Church (USA) and United Church of Christ

SPRING 2011
NEWSLETTER

Dear friends and members of The United Parish of Bowie,

Some friends of mine from seminary have teamed up to create a blog that's dedicated to seeking the sacred in the everyday moments of life. I thought I'd print one of the posts, as a little food for thought. If you'd like to explore their writing further, the blog can be found at <http://whollyordinary.wordpress.com/>

Enjoy,
Pastor Dan



Standing Together in Protest—By Margaret Anne Overstreet

In meetings, on the phone with friends, through social media: I am in conversation with a great many folks in church leadership. Regardless of context, we always seem to end up (at some point in the conversation) talking about the *future of the church* – specifically, the future of mainline Protestantism.

A steady decline in membership/ Conflict over church politics/ Debates about worship style/ A love-hate relationship with technology and social media/ Tradition vs. reinterpretation/ Unity vs. purity/ Re-imagining the role of mid-level governing bodies/ Decreasing the size of the denomination's national staff.

At every level, we seem to be clear that the picture is not all sunshine and roses. And yet, for all our talk of re-imagining and reinterpreting, how much has *really* changed. Certainly, some of our church structures are not quite as rigid as they once were. But does it follow that our Christian communities have become more able to adjust to the challenges of a new millennium, or to hear and respond to the needs of new generations? Oh, there are a very few congregations who have learned to color outside the lines ... but where are the congregations who have learned to color outside the page? who are writing on the walls, for God's sake?

Instead, we see congregations who are jumping ship and pledging their loyalties elsewhere. Or we see church leaders whose response to these disturbing trends is to hold ever-more-tightly to what is old and comfortable to them. Or we see congregations who respond to these trends with fear, which manifests itself in an attitude of unwillingness to change.

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Across the Middle East, the last month has seen protesters take to the street: to gather together and march together and to stand together to demand change. They have refused to be deterred. They have refused to abandon the ship. They have refused to abandon one another, despite the differences that might threaten to divide them. They are committed to the *end of the old* and the *beginning of something new*: something so new that no one yet knows what it will be. But even the unknown character of that future does not shake their resolve.

What if the followers of Jesus came together in such a way? What if we each grabbed a blanket and a bottle of water, then gathered together (peacefully, of course) on the fly at some arranged location? Or, better yet, at hundreds or thousands of locations around the country? What if we just refused to leave until all of those who maintain the status quo were awake to our call to change? What if we used our time together to tell stories and sing songs and build networks and form ideas and dream dreams and see visions? What if our gatherings signaled something so extraordinary, that we had the whole world watching, just to see what kind of change we would evoke?

Of course, we do have gatherings in thousands of locations around the country. We have them every week. It's too bad their character is not more revolutionary. **Not** with the aim of toppling governments and promoting anarchy; rather, with the aim of helping us to shed our Pharisaic hold on the status quo.

As one who plans worship, as one who proclaims the Word, as one who is called to lead by example, as one who is tasked with leadership at both the local and regional levels of church structure ... I recognize that I am one of the ones who hold fast to the old ways.

The old ways are comfortable. The old ways take less time. The old ways require less creativity. And some weeks, I feel as though I have limited quantities of both time and creativity.

Isn't it time that we remember that we follow a revolutionary Lord, who challenged the Temple leadership and criticized the religious regime and was more interested in inviting people into an abundant relationship with God rather than making them "comfortable"?

Communications Committee Opportunity

While we are excited about the opportunity for the Fuqua family to head home to Kansas, we will be sad to see them go! There are a few folks who have asked about the committee chair position that will be left vacant with Amy's departure. Don't worry! The Children, Youth and Family Committee will be in quite capable hands. Rebecca Holland has spent many years working with children and youth and she's excited to transition into the role of CYF Chair from her current role as the Communications Chair. And, still don't worry! The Communications Committee will also be in quite capable hands... of course we don't yet know whose... So if you have any suggestions or ideas about who would make a good chair or even if you want to nominate yourself for the chair position of the Communications Committee, please, let Pastor Dan know! Thanks! (Both Amy and Rebecca plan to complete their terms in their present positions.)

United Parish of Bowie: Winter 2010



Spiritual Formation Opportunities

Special Services



Mark your calendars! Join us as we enter into the Lenten season with an **Ash Wednesday Communion** service at 7:30pm on Wednesday, March 9th. There will be readings and music to guide us into this period of Lent.

As part of the April 3rd worship service, the Choir will present a cantata: **The Covenant of Grace by Joseph Martin**. We will celebrate God's faithfulness and his everlasting promises to his people. From the promises made to Abraham and David to their fulfillment in Christ Jesus, this work is a testimony to God's redeeming work. The service begins at 11:00am.



During **Holy Week**, there will be a **Palm Sunday** service on Sunday, April 17th at 11:00am.

On Thursday, April 21st we will focus on the story of the Last Supper during our **Maundy Thursday Communion** service at 7:30pm.

We will continue the story to the crucifixion on **Good Friday**, April 22nd, with a service at 7:30pm. There will be scripture readings, music provided by the Choir and hymn sung

during each of these services.

Sunday, April 24th, we will celebrate the risen Christ with an **Easter** service beginning at 11:00am. Come and join us as we sing glorious hymns to proclaim the amazing resurrection.

Choir

To help prepare the choir for the cantata, we will continue with special rehearsals. The next Saturday rehearsal is on March 12th from 9:00 – 11:00 am. We will be rehearsing the cantata pieces during the first part of each choir rehearsal: 7:30 – 8:15pm each Wednesday. Our dress rehearsal is on April 2nd from 9:00am – 12:00, with the readers coming at 10:00am. If you would like to be a part of this special service, please contact Diane Eades.



Calling all middle and high school youth!

We are looking for **handchime ringers**. We will be rehearsing on Wednesday evenings from 6:45 – 7:25 beginning March 16th. The group will be playing for the service on May 8th – Mother's Day. If you are interested, please contact Diane Eades.

Leadership Retreat

March 19th is the next Leadership Retreat. Please plan to attend from 9:00am – 12:00pm as we continue to work toward our goals. You can be a part of the planning process and the vision of our church!

Lenten Dinner Speakers

In keeping with our Mission Statement, United in Christ: Our mission to Serve, the Christian Spiritual Formation committee has selected a number of organizations we support to come and elaborate for us how we can work together, where our money, time and resources go and how we might better help them in the future. Please join us for the dinner at 6:00pm. The presentations will begin at 6:45 pm and will end by 7:25pm. We are expecting representatives from the following groups to be a part of our series: Central Union Mission, Bowie Food Pantry, National UCC Chapter of One Great Hour of Sharing. We will get as schedule out as soon as it is finalized.

Adult Education

Adult Ed. continues as we are exploring the book *Seeing Gray in a World of Black and White* by Adam Hamilton. Classes are

Spiritual Formation Opportunities, continued

from at 9:45 – 10:45am. Childcare is provided. Bill Collins is coordinating this course. If you would like to get a copy of the book, see Alice or Bill for one. This course will continue until April 17th. There will be NO Class on April 3rd.

The next course will begin on May 1st. It will be a New Testament Bible Study, coordinated by Rev. Dan Holland. More information will be coming out in the near future.

Library

Doug Snyder continues to coordinate the Library. Feel free to look at the materials in the library. There are also magazines that you can check out to take home and read. If you would like to donate any items to the library, see Doug.

Prayer Group

Prayer group meets from 7:00 to 8:30pm in Pastor Dan's home for a time of connection and prayer. Please join us this spring on March 29th, May 3rd, and May 31st. All are welcome!



Seeds Spring Silliness!

The Seeds Family Mid-week program will continue after Easter with a 5 -week spring session focusing on all those fun, silly songs we love to sing! Seeds takes place on Wednesday nights from 6 to 7:00pm. The Spring Silliness session will include the following dates: 4/27, 5/4, 5/11, 5/18, and 5/25. Families are invited to enjoy dinner (hopefully outside on the lawn) followed by a time of fellowship as we learn new songs and sing old favorites.

Please contact Rebecca Holland with any questions or if you would like to donate part or all of a meal.

volunteering your time either during the camp or in preparation for the camp. There are opportunities for all levels of time commitment and talent. Please contact Rebecca Holland if you are interested in

volunteering or if you have any questions. Our planning meetings will take place March 13th, April 10th, and May 1st from 12:15 to 1:30pm in the CE Room. Lunch will be provided!

Children, Youth, and Family May Survey and Forums

At the baptism of an infant or child, we agree to help support the child and the family in raising the child in faith. What is the best way for the church to support the commitment? The Children, Youth, and Family (CYF) ministry team will be taking steps in May to further discern the mission, vision, and goals of the UPB Children, Youth, and Family ministry for the coming year. We encourage all members of the United Parish of Bowie to participate by filling out a survey and by attending one of the three CYF forums. The CYF survey will be distributed

Art and Music Camp: July 25th to 29th

UPB will be hosting an Art and Music Camp from 9 to Noon, July 25th to 29th. We are hoping to get everyone involved in the fun! Please consider



Spiritual Formation Opportunities, continued

on Sunday May 8th during the worship service. The CYF Forums will take place on Sunday May 15th at 9:45am, Wednesday May 18th at 7pm, and Sunday May 22nd at 12:15pm. By attending one of the three forums, you will be given the opportunity to express your thoughts and ideas to help the Children, Youth, and Family ministry fulfill the promise we give to all children, youth, and families during baptism. Thank you in advance for your participation and support!

Elementary Age Children

The children are finishing up our series on Peter in Prison, and will soon be starting a new PowerXpress series on Mary Magdalene's Story for our Sunday School class. We will also be having a program for the children during the Lenten Dinner titled "The Upside Down Kingdom" which will explore the meaning of Lent.

Youth

The youth have started a Wednesday night Bible Study during the Seeds program. They are doing a 12-week course titled "Dark and Disturbing Stories



From the Bible" where they will be exploring some of the PG-13 stories of the Bible. They will be taking a break from Bible Study during the Lenten Dinner program to work with Diane, learning a song on hand chimes for a future worship service.

Please watch for updates on the Youth Mission trip planned for June and be sure to watch for ways you can show your support. They will also continue their regular Youth Group meeting on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month.

Pre-K Sunday School Class

The pre-K Sunday School class has been having fun and growing in faith every Sunday! Our newest Sunday School classroom has been going strong thanks to a wonderful team of volunteers who

have stepped up to take on a teaching rotation. The lessons, from the Presbyterian Wee Believe curriculum, follow the same lectionary scriptures we hear in the worship service, but teach our youngest members through story and hands on activities. A

special thanks to everyone involved!

Nursery

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered in the church nursery this winter - our little ones are thriving and growing!

Please sign up on the clipboard in the narthex if you are interested in helping with this wonderful ministry to the youngest members of our congregation and their parents.

We are still in need of a few more volunteers to fill the Spring schedule. Please talk with Rebecca Holland if you have any questions or concerns.



Membership and Fellowship Opportunities

Membership and Fellowship has been busy planning special events for the next several months.

Lenten Dinner Series

Also mark your calendars for the five Wednesday evenings between March 16th and April 13th (6:00-7:30pm). This year for Lenten Dinners we have arranged to have representatives from our mission partner organizations come tell us about what they're up to in the community and what difference they're making in the world. And, we will also have age specific opportunities for the children and youth so it's easier for families to be a part of the festivities! Please consider joining the Set Up/Clean Up Team or the Food Preparation Team for one or more of the Lenten Dinners. The sign-up sheets to RSVP and help provide meals will be at church on Sunday so think about how you'll be able to participate!

Men's Fellowship Group

Join the Men's Group on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm at a "new" location, TJ Elliott's in Bowie

Ladies Night Out *Third Friday of the month, 7pm*

March 18	Amy Fuqua: Movie & Fondue
April 15	Mary Jo Munnely: Zumba at UPB
May 20	Diane Eades Home: Bocce Ball
June 17	Louise Anim-Bosompem: TBD
July 15	Chiquita Wingo: TBD

Brunch Bunch

If you haven't participated in a Brunch Bunch yet this year, it's not too late to sign up for the

April 9th or May 14th gatherings! The idea behind Brunch Bunch is to create a get together to allow different individuals and families from the church to get to know each other a little bit better. Folks gather at Pastor Dan's home from 9:00 to 11:00am on a Saturday and enjoy a potluck brunch along with new and old friends. The hope is that everyone will get a chance to participate in one Brunch Bunch each year. Please talk with Rebecca Holland if you are interested in signing up for the April or May gatherings

Book Club

Mark your calendars for future Book Club meetings!

March 11 *Too Much Happiness*, Alice Munroe

April 1 *Uncommon Reader*, Alan Bennett

May 6 *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*, Amy Chua

(A partner book may be *Cinderella Ate my Daughter*, Peggy Orenstein)

June 3 *Angelology*, Danielle Trussoni

Additional Recommendations:

Saving Cee Cee Honeycutt, Beth Hoffman

Farewell to Alms, Gregory Clark

Pink Slips and Parting Gifts, Deb Hosey White

The Faith of Scientists, Nancy K. Frankinberry

Dewey a Small-town cat that touched the world,

Vicki Myron

The Membership and Fellowship Committee is a small group. We would welcome new members and any ideas that you might have for future events. Please contact Marva Connolly at 301-262-3520 or mconnolly@standrewsum.org.

Mission and Service Committee

"This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine!"



Operation Christmas Child



Have you Heard? On December 24th our Operation Christmas Child gift boxes were being shipped to Dem. Republic of Congo, Sudan, Tanzania, and Iraq. Please continue to pray for those delivering the gift boxes and pray that the boxes will arrive at their destinations and bring hope and God's love to many children who receive them.

Winterhaven Event

The clothing, boots, toiletries and other items so generously donated to the Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless event were very much appreciated and were handed out at the Winterhaven event on January 22nd, at the

Washington, DC VA Medical Center. 512 Veterans participated in the event.

Bowie Interfaith Food Pantry

The "Food Drive" for the Bowie Interfaith Pantry was AWESOME! Thank you for remembering to bring items each week! A special thanks to the youth group for their outreach to the church neighborhood by distributing bags to collect food for the pantry along with a note about the church and where the food is going.

Mission and Service Committee, continued



Upcoming Opportunities:

Any Soldier Initiative

We will be sending letters and care packages to service members serving around the world--many in harms way.

Family Crisis Center

We will be collecting items to prepare Easter baskets for the children living in the Crisis Center.

Christmas in April

NO SNOW PLEASE! Save the date—Saturday, April 30th. UPB has been participating in this program for many, many years. We will be assigned a house in need of repairs in Prince George's County. What a wonderful way to help our community!

Other ways we can let our light shine~

Living Waters for the World (LWW)

Support the children's Christian Education program's service project, Living Waters for the World, by donating your change to the large water bottle in the Narthex.

Bowie Interfaith Food Pantry

Continue to bring non-perishable food donations for the pantry.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Contribute to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering taken the first Sunday of each month.

Family Crisis Center

Prepare a portion of the Family Crisis Center meal on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

Sarojini Orphanage Trust (SOTI)

Provide financial support to SOTI whose mission is to touch the lives of the disadvantaged high school graduates from remote parts of India and Indonesia by empowering them with a university education.

United Campus Ministry (UCM)

Provide financial support to United Campus Ministry (UCM), one of 14 recognized chaplaincies at the University of Maryland, College Park. UCM provides students with a safe place to nurture and explore their faith in God.

Save the Date - Spring Cleaning!

The UPB spring clean-up date is Saturday, March 26th, starting at 9am.



Spring 2011

Worship 11:00am

Nursery Care Available for Infants and Young Children
Sunday School Available for Preschool to Elementary Children



Ash Wednesday Service — March 9th, 7:30pm

**Lenten Dinner Series- Every Wednesday
beginning
March 16th through April 13th, 6:00-7:30pm
For Adults and Families**

**Palm Sunday Service — April 17th, 11:00am
Maundy Thursday Service— April 21st, 7:30pm
Good Friday Service — April 22nd, 7:30pm
Easter Service — April 24th, 11:00am**



Remember to set your
clocks ahead 1 hour
on March 13th!

All are welcome! Invite your friends and family to join in celebrating the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ!

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Address Correction Requested