

SPRING
2013

UNITED PARISH OF BOWIE

United in Christ - Our Mission: To Serve

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MOVING FORWARD

As of March 14, I will have been serving alongside you as your Interim Pastor for a year. From my perspective it has been a good year; I hope you are feeling the same. If there are concerns or issues you would like to discuss, please share them with me. I would appreciate hearing them from you.

You are a very special congregation with hopes and dreams for the future. You realize moving forward necessitates change. Change never comes easily. It's hard to let go of the past, a past that has felt so comfortable and secure. And yet, you are doing so; and in the process you are prayerfully making changes that will hopefully help you to become an even stronger church.

Interims come with an agenda that includes various tasks to help you prepare for your next installed pastor: coming to terms with history; assessing the church's present and future identity; empowering the church's lay leadership; facilitating links with the denomination; and facilitating a commitment to a new installed pastor. If you would like to review these and other tasks in greater detail, I encourage you to read pages 36-38 in the 2012 Annual Report. Copies are available in the narthex or you can read it from the website.

Thus far, the primary areas of emphasis for the United Parish of Bowie have been helping you to look at yourself in the mirror, making changes that promote spiritual development through worship and Christian education for ALL ages, and developing the infrastructure of how you do the worshipful work and business of the church. In the process, you have been strengthening the identity of who you are and realizing you have grown and changed since first chartered as a church. There is an increase in denominational ties with Board members who are apprised of various opportunities that exist. Committee Chairs receive information about special denominational opportunities, especially in the areas of mission and education.

Strengthening patterns of leadership in positive and creative ways for the good of the whole church is a task that I believe needs to be addressed in greater depth. You have EXCELLENT leadership, but it is important that the church prepares for the future by equipping the saints. Yes, you. Who me? You say. Yes, you.

So I encourage you to think about and pray about where within the life of the church you might explore and use your God-given gifts and abilities. Do you have an interest, a hope, a desire? Perhaps God is calling you to explore and develop your skills in that area. It's normal to feel "So and So" is already doing a really great job. I could never do what he/she is doing. I don't have the time. Chances are they felt exactly the same way when they started. So I encourage you to talk with your Board Members and/or Committee Chairs and see where you might become involved. Within each committee are long term and

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MOVING FORWARD, continued

short term tasks/ministries to do that build up the church. You are a gifted congregation with many God-given gifts and abilities. As a faithful member, you are called to share these gifts.

Each task in the interim process is meant to help facilitate a commitment to a new installed pastor. Your Board has renewed my contract for 6 months. This is the normal procedure after the completion of a year. From here on out, my contract may be renewed in increments of 6 months, 3 months, or month to month. Each increment depends on where you are in the search process. It also serves as a reminder that the Interim may not be the next installed pastor.

By the time you receive the newsletter, you will have had the opportunity to participate in two focus groups and take part in a survey, each a step in completing the mission study. Your Mission Study Team members are Jan Barbato, Betsy Burian, Bill Collins, Sue Kennedy, and Herb Sheppard. Each thanks you for your commitment of time as they embark upon preparing the mission study report for review by you and the Board.

This means that in the near future, the Board will share with you the process for selecting the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).

You are well on your way. It is my continuous prayer that your process of self-study, search, and call will continue to occur in a climate of honesty, healing, dreaming, building, and celebrating as the Body of Christ. May my time with you continue to be a time of renewal and growth. May the light of Christ continue to shine in you and around you and through you.

Grace and peace for the journey.

Pastor Jeri, Interim Pastor

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

As we go through this season of Lent and then Saint Patrick's Day and then Holy Week, you know

WHAT that means? In addition to the obvious, that means we also have at least one more chance for winter weather! As soon as weather impacts any of our church activities, we will be doing our very best to get the word out via the phone, FaceBook, the website as well as radio and TV stations serving the Baltimore and Washington areas. Be on the lookout for a new service coming soon, where you can sign up to receive urgent updates via your text-enabled cell phone.

Speaking of new, this summer we may have new and exciting opportunities to let the area know just how special the United Parish of Bowie truly is, that will entail an integrated Team approach. While Committees are typically aligned functionally, Teams are structured to support specific events. Stay tuned for details about how you can get involved in what UPB will be doing for Bowiefest and the 4th of July. While it seems like a long way off, both will be here before we know it.

This last week we welcomed Sudha Hillary to the UPB Communication and Coordination Committee. We have been looking forward to his unique insight and enthusiasm for a longtime and the good news is we also have an opening for you! This year we will be pursuing new advertising avenues, designing and installing new colorful banners, establishing and strengthening relationships with local media outlets, researching signage options while continuing to serve all of the other UPB committees as they serve all of us, and oh yeah – we laugh a lot as we enjoy some delicious food. As the banners and signs say, “Come and See!”

A Look Back at Winter 2012



THE BIBLE

On 3/3/13 The History Channel began presenting "The Bible" in ten one-hour segments. This is an opportunity to reconnect with biblical stories you heard when you were growing up or hear the stories for the first time. This series tries not to take the stories out of context nor give it the Hollywood slant. It has "superb acting, magnificent imagery and beautiful storytelling" according to Paul Tuns, the editor-in-chief of a pro-life, pro-family publication, The Interim. Will you join me in checking out this miniseries? --Shirley Bickel



Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord

On Sunday, February 10, 2013 three octaves of hand chimes were dedicated to the glory of God in memory of The Rev. Dr. Carl O. Bickel, organizing pastor. The children honored the gift by playing them as the congregation sang "Step by Step" during the service. Our prayer is that young and old will delight in creating and listening to the joyful making of music to praise God. We are grateful to Shirley Bickel for her generous gift of these hand chimes in memory of her loving husband. Carl loved music in so many forms and Shirley loves watching the children as they play the chimes. To God be the glory!

Get Connected: UPB Text Message Service

We are starting a text message service to inform members and friends of the United Parish about cancellations and time changes for Sunday Worship, Sunday School, SEEDS, etc.

If you would like to be notified of these changes via your cell phone, send an email to notifyme@unitedparishbowie.org with the subject line "UPB Text Service" and, Your Name, Your Cell Phone Number in the body of the message.

While testing the service we will send several texts. If you do not have unlimited text messaging on your phone you may not want to sign up until the tests are complete. At the end of the tests we will notify everyone that the service is fully operational. After that texts will only be sent for cancellations and other changes in schedule.

Mission Study Committee

Following approval by the Parish

Board, the Mission Study Committee (Jan Barbato, Betsy Burian, Bill Collins, Sue Kennedy, and Herb Sheppard), began meeting in November. The committee is charged with the task of gathering information and data from a variety of sources, including the congregation. This information will then be used to write a report that shows who we are as a congregation, where we believe God is leading us, our hopes and dreams for the future of the United Parish, and what we are looking for in our next pastor. In order to hear from as many people as possible, the committee scheduled two 90 minute focus groups: Session 1 was held January 27 and January 28. Session 2 was held February 24 and February 25. There was also a Congregation Life Survey given on February 10. The completed Mission Study Report will be given to the Pastor Nominating Committee and used in writing the Church Information Form which will be viewed by potential candidates. The committee thanks everyone for participating in this very important process.

CLERK'S CORNER

The Parish Board elected officers for the coming year:

Vice Moderator: Kathy Busch
Treasurer: Mike Mehl
Secretary/Clerk: Walter Trafton

The Board also elected representatives to the National Capital Presbytery and the UCC: Gene Barbato, Roy Eades, and Mike Mehl.

MISSION AND SERVICE



Valentines for Veterans: Thank you to all who took the time to write a note or make a Valentine for a Veteran. The Valentines were distributed to Veteran patients during Valentine's Day week. The Department of Veterans Affairs hosts the National Salute to Veteran Patients program which is designed to pay tribute and express appreciation to Veterans. A special thanks to Penny Simpson who had the preschool and kindergarten classes at St. Andrew's Methodist Day School join us by making valentines for this service project!



A special thanks to Barbara Trafton for coordinating the ladies night out service project and selecting three initiatives from our committee's 2013 hopes and dreams list. The ladies collected and assembled 17 Hygiene Kits for Church World Service (In the face of natural disasters, violence, or grinding poverty, Hygiene Kits can mean the difference between sickness and health for struggling families.) They also put together care packages for the Any Soldier Project (snacks, foods, slippers, toys, and games). They will be sent to an Army unit based from Laurel, Maryland who will be serving in Afghanistan until August 2013. Another prayer blanket was completed with lots of love and laughter!



Saturday, April 27, 2013

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! More info to come.



MISSION AND SERVICE

Upcoming Opportunities

Warm Nights: On Saturday, March 16, 2013, UPB will provide the meal for Warm Nights hosted by Village Baptist Church. Instead of chili, we have been asked to prepare stew, salad, bread, and dessert.

Easter Baskets for the Family

Crisis Center: We will collect items and/or accept donations to prepare Easter baskets for the children living at the Family Crisis Center. The baskets will be delivered on Palm Sunday and will contain healthier snacks and toys such as jump ropes and balls.

Focused Food Drive: With input from the Bowie Interfaith Pantry and to help restock the most needed items, our 3rd annual "focused" food drive will be held from April 7-May 12, 2013. We will focus on a particular nonperishable item each week.

Family Crisis Center Themed

Meals: Thank you for supporting this each month! Our meals are a blessing to the women and children at the Crisis Center. The upcoming themes are as follows:

March 17-Traditional Irish Dinner

(such as corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, bread, and dessert)

April 21-Traditional Easter Dinner (such as ham, potatoes, green beans, carrot cake)

May 19-Mexican (such as tacos, burritos, quesadillas, soup, salad, dessert)

Living Waters for the World (LWW)-

Please help the children's Christian Education program with its service project to support the effort of LWW to bring clean drinking water to all God's Children in poor and developing countries all around the world. Join the children in this worthwhile service project by depositing whatever amount (pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, or currency) you want to donate in the large water bottle in the area outside the sanctuary.

Listening to My Father

An anthem



Raindrops, raindrops, I am wakened by the raindrops
like the rhythm of a baby breathing softly in the night.
I cannot go to sleep now. God is so very near.
What is my Father saying?
Why does He call me here?
Does He know these struggles I am having?
Is He humming He will make it right?
Raindrops, raindrops feeding flowers and the trees.
I want God to rain on me, cleanse me and make me free.
Wipe away uncertainty and fears.
Feed my thirst and help me breathe
my Father's giving spirit bringing hope to those in need.
Raindrops, raindrops. I am listening to my Father.
Where He leads me I will follow,
follow, follow, follow.

Shirley Klotz Bickel, C. 2013



Spring Bible Study: We will be offering a Spring Bible Study on Mondays. There are no firm details at this time but look for information in the upcoming Weekly Update and Sunday bulletins.

BOOK CLUB

April 5 *Poisonwood Bible*, Barbara Kingsolver
The *Poisonwood Bible* is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it -- from garden seeds to Scripture -- is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa.

May 3 *Thunderstruck*, Erik Larson
A true story of love, murder, and the end of the world's "great hush" In *Thunderstruck*, Erik Larson tells the interwoven stories of two men--Hawley Crippen, a very unlikely murderer, and Guglielmo Marconi, the obsessive creator of a seemingly supernatural means of communication--whose lives intersect during one of the greatest criminal chases of all time. Set in Edwardian London and on the stormy coasts of Cornwall, Cape Cod, and Nova Scotia, *Thunderstruck* evokes the dynamism of those years when great shipping companies competed to build the biggest, fastest ocean liners, scientific advances dazzled the public with visions of a world transformed, and the rich outdid one another with ostentatious displays of wealth. *Thunderstruck* is splendid narrative history from a master of the form.

June 7 *An Edible History of Humanity*, Tom Standage
Throughout history, food has done more than simply provide sustenance. It has acted as a tool of social transformation, political organization, geopolitical competition, industrial development, military conflict and economic expansion. *An Edible History of Humanity* is an account of how food has helped to shape and transform societies around the world, from the emergence of farming in China by 7,500 BCE to today's use of sugar cane and corn to make ethanol. Food has been a kind of technology, a tool that has changed the course of human progress. It helped to found, structure, and connect together civilizations worldwide, and to build empires and bring about a surge in economic development through industrialization. Food has been employed as a military and ideological weapon. And today, in the culmination of a process that has been going on for thousands of years, the foods we choose in the supermarket connect us to global debates about trade, development and the adoption of new technologies. Drawing from many fields including genetics, archaeology, anthropology, ethno-botany and economics, the story of these food-driven transformations is a fully satisfying account of the whole of human history.

Possible Summer Reading: *Pillars of the Earth*, Ken Follett

Spring SEEDS



SEEDS will resume on Wednesday, April 17, and will continue every Wednesday through May 15. Dinner is at 6:00, followed by games, Bible stories, and music in the sanctuary.

During the winter, our words were follow, follower, and disciple. We discussed what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and how to talk to our friends about Jesus. We sang "The Twelve Disciples" and tried to remember all the names!!! We also played the chimes to "Step By Step" and "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus".

In Spring SEEDS, we will be focusing on miracles and are looking forward to having the kids help the adult choir with a song called "Miracle Man"!

This is a great time for families to gather together for food, fun, and worship, so please plan to attend. And if you are able to help provide a meal, please speak to Pearl Donovan.

Spiritual Formation

The Communion Table has looked a little different over the last couple of months. The Christian Spiritual Formation Committee has had a series of discussions concerning the appearance of the Table. Why were there 2 candles, why not one (a Christ candle) or three? When did that start? As UPB moves forward, our committee will take a theological look at the "whys" of what we do. We have as a committee placed our Communion set on the Table each week, not just on Communion Sunday. The set is a gift from Bill and Alice Collins in memory of Alice's dad, Bill McFarland. We have placed a Bible on the Table given to Shirley at the time of Carl's death. We feel these items are meaningful to our worship service and meaningful to us as a congregation.

If you would like to participate in discussions that will affect the life of our church, please make time to come to our meetings. The dates and times are posted. We will be discussing the information sent to us about a new sound system and ways to incorporate a screen for visual technology. If you are not able to attend the meetings, please feel free to make comments or suggestions to someone on the committee.

Art & Music Camp 2013

Save the date! The United Parish of Bowie will host our third annual Art & Music Camp, a half day fun-filled faith based camp for preschoolers through 5th grade. This year the camp will be July 22-26, 2013, from 9:00 am to noon. The children will rotate through stations of art, music, games, and drama. If you have talents in any of these areas, or just want to help children grow in their faith, please talk to either Sue, Diane, or Julissa about volunteering. There is something for everyone to do!



News from the Library Team



With the addition of Cathie Lambert, our team has doubled in size--from one to two! Cathie brings high enthusiasm and energy, along with some good ideas. In the coming weeks, we shall display some of the newer acquisitions in the Narthex, including the following books, which have been selected for their topicality: Youth Violence: Theory, Prevention, and Intervention, When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God, Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Theologian, Soldier, Spy and Muled Psalms: Moving from I to We. The last selection takes each psalm in turn, and rewrites it in modern, but still poetic language.

Please let us know if we can assist you.
Doug Snyder
Library Coordinator

THE UNITED PARISH OF BOWIE

United in Christ - Our Mission: To Serve

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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 future publications.



Daylight Savings begins
Sunday at 2 am on
March 10!

*You are welcome
here. Invite your
friends, neighbors
and family to join in
celebrating the
resurrection of our
Lord, Jesus Christ!*



Upcoming Special Events and Services



Lenten Dinner Devotions: Join us on Wednesday evenings (**March 13, 20**) at 6:30 pm for a series by John Indemark called *Gospeled Lives*. The Rev. Jeri Fields will facilitate the discussion for all ages. There will be a simple meal of soup, salad and bread beginning at 6:00pm in the Christian Ed. room.

Maundy Thursday Service

March 28 at 7:30 pm

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

March 29 at 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday Service

March 31 at 10:45 am

Spring SEEDS

April 17 - May 15

Christmas in April

April 27

Art & Music Camp

July 22-26

