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UNITED PARISH OF BOWIE

United in Christ - Our Mission: To Serve

FROM ASH WEDNESDAY TO EASTER

Ashes on our forehead to the alleluias and proclamation that Christ is risen on Easter morning

Ash Wednesday (*March 5 this year*) introduces Lent, a season of preparation leading up to Holy Week with the joyful alleluias and proclamation on Easter (*April 20*) that Christ has been raised from the dead.

During Lent, Christians throughout the world are encouraged to focus on spiritual disciplines such as fasting, prayer, penitence, reading the Bible, meditating on the scriptures, and intentional acts of service. Actively engaging in these practices serves to promote and enhance a more intimate relationship with God, while experiencing the mystery of new life in Christ. Be prepared to expect the unexpected!

Ash Wednesday services are rich in ritual and symbolism. Ashes have a long history in biblical and church traditions. In Scripture, ashes or dust symbolize frailty or death (*Gen. 18:27*), sadness or mourning (*Esther 4:3*), judgment (*Lam. 3:16*), and repentance (*Jonah 3:6*).

During the Ash Wednesday Service to be held here at the United Parish of Bowie on March 5 at 7:30 pm, people will be invited to come forward for the imposition of ashes - the placing of ashes in the shape of a cross on one's forehead. As the mark of the cross is placed on each forehead, words such as "You are dust, and to dust you shall return," are spoken. With these words God's people are reminded of their mortality, along with hope in the resurrection. Yes, out of the darkness comes light!

Then for the next five Wednesdays, a simple Lenten meal of soup, salad, and bread will be prepared by members and friends of the congregation to be shared at 6:00 pm. Around 6:30 until 7:15 or so we will embark upon a time of devotion and celebration of the Lord's Supper. This time of devotion will be participatory. Each week is well suited for older children and adults of all ages. Trevor Hudson's book *Questions God Asks Us* will be used as the basis for this time together.

During each Sunday of Lent there will be a short dramatization of a Biblical character. Also, children/youth from SEEDS, who play a musical instrument, will share their musical abilities and offer a solo introit at the beginning of most of these services.

Holy Week begins April 13, Palm – Passion Sunday. During this week there will also be a service on Maundy Thursday (*April 17*) and Good Friday (*April 18*). Both services begin at 7:30 pm. Then on Sunday morning, April 20 at 10:45 we joyfully celebrate Easter.

I encourage you to invite others to join us on our Lenten pilgrimage, a time to be in community and to share biblical hospitality, as together we explore God's word.

I'm excited and hopeful for this special time together. I hope and pray you are, too.

Grace and peace to you in your journey.

In His service,

Rev. Jeri Fields, Interim Pastor





HYMNFEST 2014

Choirs from Berwyn, Riverdale, and United Parish joined together to sing "I Surrender All" at a HymnFest hosted by the United Parish of Bowie on Sunday afternoon March 2. These choir members and several guests enjoyed singing familiar and new hymns/songs from the hymnal *Lift Up Your Hearts*. The hymns/songs, litanies, and scripture reading selected from this hymnal represented the biblical narrative from creation to new creation, including Christ's life and the Christian year. Immediately following this joyful occasion was a time of fellowship, while enjoying pie a la mode.

Comments included: "It was really perfect. I especially enjoyed singing with your choir."

"Was fun and more."

"Enjoyable!"

"HymnFest is a very good idea which should be rotated through the participating churches."

"The hymn service was really nice!"

"We should do this once a year!"

"It was a time of spiritual uplifting and joy. I wish that we could have something like that every month! What a fantastic idea of having pie and ice cream as refreshments after the singing. There were enough pies there to feed an army. Whoever had that idea should be made a saint! "

A very special thank you to Diane, Shirley, Sue, and Betsy for directing and playing. Special thanks to the Christian Spiritual Formation Committee (Alice and Bill Collins, Shirley Bickel, Diane Eades, Sue Kennedy, and Pastor Jeri) for their support in this endeavor that was so very meaningful for the choirs and festival guests. Thank you ComCom for all the publicity. Thank you Membership and Fellowship for the set-up/clean-up and serving the refreshments. And to those who provided pies and the ice cream: WOW, what a wonderful selection. The pies were delicious! THANK YOU! This was truly a team effort.



Source: www.facebook.com/GeoffGallanteFanPage

Amazing talent Geoff Gallante at UPB

Eighth grade trumpet prodigy Geoff Gallante from Alexandria, VA, already has quite a career under his belt, including performances at the Kennedy Center and the White House, on the Today Show, and The Tonight Show. And now he will be adding to his list of venues the United Parish of Bowie on Saturday, May 3 at 4:00 PM! A free will donation will be collected at the 90 minute concert. Plan to attend. Pastor Jeri has seen him in concert several times, and he is amazing!

You can check him out on FaceBook on his fan page:

<https://www.facebook.com/GeoffGallanteFanPage> or look for any number of YouTube

videos. This is a concert for all ages. Children are encouraged to experience his playing.

A Look Back at Winter 2013...





Communications Committee

Can Spring be right around the corner? It must be, because another article is due, but I'm just not feeling it yet. I mean snow is still on the ground, a couple of days ago the plow made it's long awaited second pass on our street to make a path larger than a wheelbarrow and take out some of the frozen ruts and sharp ice walls. Unfortunately, we still have a ways to go with this Winter, so we will continue to get the word out on UPB's operating status

through a variety of high-tech and not so high-tech ways (group texts, phone calls, e-mails, announcements on area broadcast outlets, the UPB website and on UPB's FaceBook page). When in doubt, be safe and call someone.

A few weeks ago, the Committee Chairs joined together for our Quarterly (-ish) meeting and discussed to plans for the next year, with a particular focus on what is happening in the life of the Church over the next half year and then backwards planning to identify what needs to take place in the short-term to make those events successful and rewarding. Since UPB will participate in BowieFest this Summer, planning will need to start in earnest soon; learning from our experiences, identifying and empowering a cross-functional team, registering with the City of Bowie, and dozens of other decisions.

We have one opportunity to get the same pricing as last year on our distinctly unique UPB lime-o T-shirts, so if you are thinking you will need some please annotate your quantities and sizes on the clipboard in the narthex. While we will still be able to order more in the future, our vendor is providing us with quite a one-time price break – essentially allowing us to get the same bulk prices as last year, without a minimum order. So we will again be able to offer the same value to you, with your cost share at \$10 per shirt (regardless of size). With Mike's help, we were able to get some additional accounting clarity this year, so we will be able to give you a specific designator to put on your check or envelope when your T-shirts come in.

From a Communications and Coordination perspective, we look for ways to help other Committees get out the Good News about all that is happening in UPB. To that end, we will be replacing out some of our war-torn corner banners for both general UPB information as well as smaller, distinct events (Seeds, Art & Music Camp, etc.). If you have something you would like advertised, please let us know as soon as possible. You will need to describe What you are doing, When you are doing it and for Whom. If you have already created ad copy, please share that. If you have an idea what feeling or emotion you are trying to convey, please share that with us. If you have pieces, but need help pulling it all together – please let us know. Many of our regular newspapers and online resources have strictly imposed deadlines for free and/or reduced cost Non-Profit community announcements (reading between the lines, if you wait until right before the event for an advertising push, you will generally get two choices: we need to plan better for next year or how much can your committee/team pay to place last-minute ads?).

While we will gladly take good ideas, sample art, etc. from anybody; if you want your opinion to translate into a vote about specific signage or announcement, you already know what you have to do – and isn't it just your lucky day that we have an opening on the Committee just for you?

Wishing You and Yours an Extra Scoop of Shalom and Hello SPRING!



*Don't
forget to
set your
clocks
forward
an hour
before
you go to
bed THIS
Saturday,
March 8!*



Ash Wednesday and Lenten Services

There will be an Ash Wednesday service on March 5th at 7:30 P.M.

The first Lenten dinner is on March 12 and continuing each Wednesday through April 9th.

We would like to encourage families to come for a simple meal of soup and salad followed by a presentation with conversation and an activity. The meal will be served at 6:00 P.M. with the program from 6:30-7:15 P.M.

A Maundy Thursday Service will be held on April 17th at 7:30 P.M., and the Good Friday service will be on April 18th.



Easter Garden: The Empty Tomb

On March 16th during Sunday School, the two children's classes will combine, talk about Easter and create an Easter Garden. Hope to see the children at 10 am!

Adult Christian Education

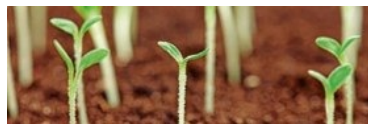
Adult Christian Ed meets prior to Sunday worship in the library from 9:30 - 10:30 A.M. We are studying the Bible using this quarter's lectionary-based lessons from ***Feasting on the Word***. We are reading Bible scripture and using a worksheet to discuss the meaning of the passage and how we can apply the message to our daily lives.

On March 16th, the class will discuss the book ***Simon of Cyrene: The Cross-Bearer's Legacy, A Story of the Faith and the Trials of Early Christians***. And the following week, we will be joined by the author of the book, Richard Neff for a discussion. Please join the class.



PASTOR SEARCH

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) continues to meet weekly to read and evaluate Presbyterian Personal Information Forms and UCC Profiles, listen to sermons, interview candidates, and talk to references. As of the end of February, we have received information from 111 candidates. The process of calling a pastor has many steps and we know and trust that God is with the PNC and each candidate as we discern where He is leading us. Please continue to keep the PNC, as well as the candidates, in your prayers.



SEEDS

Winter SEEDS was a time for "Exploring our Faith". After coming up with different words related to faith, such as trust, believe, joy, hope, praise, follow, and serving, we used these words to create a word find puzzle. We read Psalm 150 together and talked about different ways to praise God. We also talked about different things that we worry about, and found words and phrases in Matthew 6:25-34 that explain why we should not worry. To help us on those occasional bad days, everyone made a "Bad Day Jar", and filled it with different Bible verses that remind us that God is always with us, even on the bad days. If anyone wants to make their own "Bad Day Jar", the verses we used are on the table in the Narthex. Finally, we talked about how to show love during Lent, then made and ate love knots!

Along with great discussions and activities, we began each session with singing "Leap of Faith" and ended with "One Step He Leads", which was sung by the choir and SEEDS participants during worship on March 2.

Thank you to Joey and Terry who helped coordinate the meals, and to everyone who provided food and helped clean up.

Spring SEEDS begins April 30.



Christmas in April

Saturday, April 26, 2014 UPB has been participating in the county's Christmas in April year after year. Mark your calendar to help serve our community. More information to come.



Art & Music Camp - 2014

Save the date! The United Parish of Bowie will hold its 4th annual Art & Music Camp, a half day fun-filled faith based camp for preschoolers through fifth

grade. This year camp will be July 14-18, 2014, from 9:00 am to noon. The children will rotate through stations of art, music, games, and drama. If you have any talents in any of these areas, or just want to be a part of helping children grow in their faith, please talk to either Diane or Sue about volunteering. There is something for everyone to do!

Where in the World Are You?!?

Welcome back to our world travelers who have recently returned from visiting family and/or vacation:

The Saudagars - Pakistan
Violet Igwacho - Cameroon
Joey and Terry Drown - Australia
Barbara and Walter Trafton - New Zealand, Australia, and Tahiti
Nikki and Josi Hillary - India

As I write this out, it's a really impressive list of countries visited since the first of the year.

And Diane and Sue are headed to Ireland in June! Safe travels!



Family Crisis Center

UPB provides a home-cooked or prepared meal on the 3rd Sunday of each month for 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). Sign up on table in Narthex.

March 16-Irish Dinner (such as corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, bread, and dessert)

April 20-Easter Dinner (such as ham, potatoes, green beans, carrot cake, cupcakes)

Warm Nights

Warm Nights is a Hypothermia Program that operates during the winter months to provide overnight shelter to individuals needing to escape the cold temperatures. Individuals stay at area churches and are provided meals.

On Saturday, **March 15**, UPB will provide the meal for Warm Nights hosted by Village Baptist Church. We have been asked to prepare beef and chicken stew, salad, bread, and dessert. *Please drop off your food offering directly at Village Baptist NLT 6pm on Saturday, March 15, 2014. Please bring stew in a crock-pot with liner.*

Living Waters for the World (LWW)

Please continue to help the children's Christian Education program with its service project to support the effort of LWW in bringing clean drinking water to all God's children in poor and developing countries all around the world. You may find the large water bottle in the narthex to deposit any amount you wish.

Souper Bowl of Caring



A very special thank you was sent to the United Parish of Bowie from the Bowie Food Pantry. Due to your generosity in donating cans of soup through the Souper Bowl of Caring, families in the area received an extra can of soup in the bags of food distributed to those in need of food. On a cold winter day, there's nothing like the warmth of soup. When hungry, soup is filling. Jesus said, "Whatever you do to the least of these my family members, you do to me." Those in need of food were fed because you cared, because you "listened" to Jesus. Jesus also said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." You let your light shine, giving glory to God, through all the cans of soup that were delivered in the name of the church. May God continue to bless you with a heart of generosity.

Why Wear Your Name Tags?

It's a given fact, most people at church do not like to wear a name tag. Why? Because it's too difficult to remember to wear it. I don't like what it does to my clothing. Besides, I know other people and they know me. While the latter is true for the inner circle of any church, there are visitors, new members, and those with forgetfulness who would love to know or remember your name, to call you by name. So may you think about the needs of others and less about yourself. Perhaps a Lenten discipline for the next 5 weeks might include an act of hospitality demonstrated by wearing your name tag.



**CAN
YOU
HEAR
ME
NOW?**

Yes, I can! Why I can even turn down my hearing aids. It's great to be able to hear the children's responses during Time with the Children. How wonderful it was to hear the children during the Christmas program: "The Twelve Days of Christmas!" When at the HymnFest participants spoke into the mic from their seats as they led a litany, or a prayer or read scripture, a guest said, "Sure wish we could hear people as clearly in our sanctuary as you can."

I think everyone would agree that the sound system has enhanced the experience of worship. Thanks to your generous contributions and a Church Development Grant from National Capital Presbytery for \$3500, so long as people follow through on their level of commitment pledged for the sound

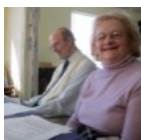
system this year, you are really, really close to completely paying for it. Only a couple more thousand dollars needed. If several of you step up to the challenge with an extra \$5 or \$25 or more, then by the end of the year you will have repaid what you borrowed from yourselves. What an accomplishment. To God be the glory!

Upcoming Events and Services, HOLY WEEK and beyond...

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



Ash Wednesday Service	March 5, 7:30 P.M.
Lenten Dinners & Worship	On Wednesdays (March 12- April 9), dinner starts at 6 P.M.
Maundy Thursday Service	April 17, 7:30 P.M.
Good Friday Service	April 18, 7:30 P.M.
Easter Sunday Service	April 20, 10:45 A.M.
Christmas in April	April 26, 9 A.M.
Spring SEEDS	Begins April 30
Geoff Gallante	May 3, 4:00 P.M.
Re-Charter Sunday	June 6
BowieFest	June 7
Worship in the Park	June 22
Art & Music Camp	July 14-18, 9 A.M. - 12 P.M.



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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.