

United Parish of Bowie

News and Notes

May 6, 2026

Pastor's Notes

Rev. Dr. Scott Wilson

I happened upon this article on the PC(USA) website. I love the analogy of churches in our “Blockbuster moment” and the hopeful future that it holds out, as we adapt to a new environment. See what you think -

“We in the church are experiencing something similar to what Blockbuster and other video rental stores went through in the early 2000s when people changed how they accessed movies. Instead of driving to a physical store to rent a DVD (or VHS, for those of us who remember those), we started getting movies sent to us through the mail via Netflix, which was then a mail-order DVD rental service. Within a few years, we stopped doing even that. Now we just stream movies directly to our computer, tablet or TV. We didn’t stop watching movies, though. We still want the feelings and impact that watching a movie at home provides — but we access that experience in a very different way today.

“We are in a Blockbuster moment in the church. God is not shrinking or going away. Some churches will grow. New churches will be planted. Not all churches will close. People still want to experience the transcendent and the Divine. They still crave and thrive in a caring community. They still want to be involved in causes and activities that are larger than themselves and that positively impact lives.

“But fewer and fewer people want to experience those things in a Sunday morning worship service followed by Sunday school classes. Our programs, our ways of being church, and our spaces and buildings no longer affect and serve people as they once did. This shift is happening whether we want it to or not.

“Blaming ourselves or one another does not help. Imagine telling the manager of a local Blockbuster in 2001 that to turn things around and keep the old model working, they just needed to try harder, put up a new sign, carry different movies on the shelves or hire a new, younger, hipper manager wearing tight jeans. The early 2000s video rental store could do nothing to keep that model working; the social change that led to its closure was beyond its control. Similarly, the only way forward in this time of major social and religious change is to adapt, change and move forward.”

We believe that the Holy Spirit is still at work in our community and in our fellowship of believers, so that is good news! We look forward to celebrating Pentecost once again – the

birth of the church - as well as UPB's 49th anniversary as a caring community. May a new era begin as UPB looks towards 50 years.

See You Sunday.

UPCOMING WORSHIP SCHEDULE

May 10	Mother's Day	
	Exodus 2:1-10	"Better Caught than Taught"
May 17	Seventh Sunday of Easter	
	Joshua 24:12-15	"A Tough Act to Follow"
May 24	Pentecost Sunday	
	Acts 2:1-21	"Conviction, Coincidence, Conduit"
May 31	Trinity Sunday	
	We welcome Rev. Holly Jackson, UCC Staff Support to Potomac and Chesapeake Associations to lead worship.	

UPB Reunion: June 7: Plans are being made for a UPB Reunion. Details coming soon!

UPB Spring Clean-Up: Plans are in place for a Church Clean -Up Day on Saturday, May 16. Please look for the sign up sheet to see how you can participate.

Communion Servers Needed: Anyone who is currently on the Parish Board, or has ever served on the Parish Board, is invited to sign up to be a Communion Server. There is a sign-up sheet In the Narthex.

Art & Music Camp: It's time to start planning for UPB's 16th Annual Art and Music Camp. This year's camp will be July 2024 and the theme is "Rainforest Falls- Exploring the Nature of God. If you are interested in helping in any way, please see Sue.

Women's Circle: Women's Circle, 2nd Saturday of each month all year long at 10 am. All women of congregation and all women of our community. See Dawn for info 4Dawn.LP@gmail.com

Mother's Day Tea: Saturday May 9 at 10 am. See Dawn for more information.

Ladies Lunch: Is now the Second Wednesday at First Watch. First Watch is located at 15471 Excelsior Dr, Bowie, MD 20716. Please let Sharon Doughty know you are coming, and yes, you can bring a friend.

SERVICE & MISSION COMMITTEE

Bowie Food Pantry: Please bring your non-perishable food donation, paper goods, baby items (diapers/wipes) and toiletries to the basket by the side door. Reminder when selecting items to donate to the Bowie Pantry, UPB also helps stock the rice shelf as part of the Pantry's adopt-a-shelf program. Thanks for your generous giving.

Men's Fellowship

Men's Breakfast: 2nd and 4th Thursday at 9 am at First Watch in Bowie Town Center.

Men's Night Out: 3rd Thursday at 6:30 pm at Glory Days in Edgewater

Book Club

1st Friday at 7:00 pm at the Barbato's. Contact Jan Barbato for info