



# United Parish of Bowie

United in Christ – Our Mission: To Serve



## **“The Promise of New Life”**

Just when we thought we were going to skate through another mild winter, SNOWMAGGEDDON struck! Although I haven't heard official totals, about two and a half feet of snow were dumped on Bowie. There were a lot of comments in our house about having moved from Illinois to get away from that type of

weather; comments about seeking the milder winters of Maryland compared to the Midwest.

I'll be honest, we never had that much snow in one storm in the six years in Illinois. However, I still think it was a milder storm. Yes, it was more snow, but it did not get nearly as cold! It is a lot nicer shoveling when the temperature is in the low 20's than when the wind chill is in the negative twenties!

Enough with the very amateur meteorological report. The reason I brought this up is because snow always reminds me of God's grace. During the winter, our yards tend to not look their best. They become brown and dried out. Then the snow falls. All the dirtiness and the ugliness is covered up. There are few things more beautiful than fresh fallen snow unmarred by footprints or tracks or plows. Then the neighbor or the dog walks through it or it begins to melt and soon it is marred and misshapen. However, another snow soon covers that up as well.

The snow reminds me of God's grace. We are a broken, distorted image of God in our brokenness, then God's grace comes and covers our sinfulness and we are left pristine, beautiful; whole. Over time our sinfulness creeps in again,

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and God's grace is there to cover it again. It is amazing and beautiful all at the same time.

Another way that the blizzard here was less severe than those we faced in Illinois is that it warmed up almost immediately. School continued to be closed for a week because of how much snow we had, but within a week and a half, it was mostly melted. In Illinois, once it snowed, the snow stayed in some form until spring. Some of it might have melted away, but you didn't see grass again until spring.

We knew after the snow melted away, we would soon see flowers bloom. We would see leaves on the trees. We would see the grass begin to turn green. We knew that after God's grace, came new life.

- Pastor Chris

*Isaiah 1:18 "Come now, let us argue it out, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool."*

## I ♥ Book Club

March 11  
April 1  
May 6  
June 3

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr  
The Paradise of Glass by Petra Durst-Benning  
Superstorm by Kathryn Miles  
(read one or both!)  
The Code Book by Simon Singh  
The Husband's Secret by Liane Moriarty



**Christmas in April ★  
Prince George's County**

## SAVE THE DATE! **Saturday, APRIL 30, 2016**

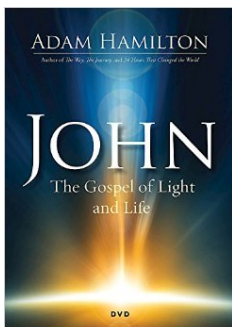
Christmas in April has been "rebuilding homes and spirits since 1989". Mark your calendars (April 30) for UPB's annual participation in this annual event.

Interested in another way to support Christmas in April? Whenever you shop at Amazon be sure to use the link below and select Christmas in April Prince George's County as your charity. We will earn .5% on every purchase made. Be sure to share this with friends, family and co-workers. <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1623793> Thank you for your support and happy shopping!

Don't forget to set your clocks **ahead** by one hour before retiring for bed on Saturday, March 12!



## Christian Spiritual Formation (CSF)



The adults will discuss John, The Gospel of Light and Life by Adam Hamilton for our study on Sundays during Lent (Now through March 20). The Gospel of John is the most deeply spiritual of the four Gospels. In this study, you follow the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus through the Gospel of John and understand the context of some of the best-known verses in the New Testament. It is encouraged that the class members get the book to enhance our discussions. It is available from Amazon for \$15.01.

## Mission and Service



The monthly "home cooked" meals are delivered to the Safe Passage House, which serves abused wives and their children. This facility is an important part of the services

administered by the Family Crisis Center. We have been providing this monthly meal on the third Sunday of every month for approximately thirty years. Each meal has a specific theme.

Our second Warm Nights meal will be served at Village Baptist Church on Saturday, March 19. We have agreed to bring beef stew, corn bread, salad, and dessert again. This year, the Warm Nights program will continue until early June. There is a possibility that All Saints Lutheran Church will be housing homeless guests in early May. If so, we may be asked to donate an evening meal.

We shall also be preparing Easter Baskets for the children at the Safe Passage House, who usually number in the mid-twenties.

**Souper Bowl Challenge and Chili/Dessert Cook-off Results:** The congregation brought in 41 food items for the Broncos and 64 food items for the Panthers. With another 41 food items matching the Broncos, this was 146 food items for the **Bowie Food Pantry!** Additionally, Jan Barbato repeated as our chili champion, while Ting Chin won the dessert cook-off. The cook-off brought in \$408.01 for the **Mars Hill Mission Trip**. Thank you for participating in these two events to support our mission.

## A Look Back at Winter 2015/16...



### ART & MUSIC CAMP – 2016



Save the date! The United Parish of Bowie will hold its sixth annual Art & Music Camp July 25-29, 2016 from 9:00 am to noon. The theme this year is **Deep Sea Discovery: God is With Me Wherever I Go!** Everyone will explore God's presence in their lives, and learn that God is always with them and sends them out to serve others. In addition, kids will hear how the daily Bible story ties into God's bigger story – His plan for salvation and what Christ's sacrifice means for them as they are challenged to respond to God's love in real and meaningful ways. The daily theme will be reinforced as children rotate through the different 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 Eades or Sue Kennedy about volunteering. There is something for everyone to do! And please plan to attend our first meeting on April 17.

## Board Corner: Spring 2016

It is important to the Board that our congregation is kept informed on discussions that are taking place and decisions that are being made for the good of the United Parish of Bowie. Minutes of Board meetings, along with agendas, monthly financial statements, and the pastor's report, are kept in a binder in the church library.

In the past few months, the Board has been at work in several different areas including:

- The Board is pleased to announce that a new nursery attendant, Ms. Autumn Hazzard has been hired. Also, the sanctuary sound system is in the process of being extended to the nursery so that services can be heard there.
- The Board continued to work on and finalize a Personnel Policy Manual for the church.
- The Board developed both Pastor and Board Evaluation Survey Forms, which were distributed to the congregation to solicit feedback. The information collected will aid Board discussions and actions to further the ongoing mission of our church.
- The Board elected its officers for the 2016 calendar year: Walter Trafton as Secretary/Clerk, Roy Eades as Treasurer, and Gene Barbato as Vice Moderator.
- The Board elected Sharon Doughty as representative to the Presbytery, and Doug Snyder as representative to the UCC.
- The 2016 UPB Budget was developed by outgoing Treasurer, Mike Mehl, and incoming Treasurer, Roy Eades. The Board approved the budget January 30, 2016, and it was submitted to and approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting February 7, 2016.
- The Board reviewed the church's insurance status, and it was determined to be in good order.
- The Board approved reducing the size of the Board from nine members to seven over the next two years. In addition, the Board approved allowing a Board member to concurrently serve as a committee chair.
- The Board approved replacing the damaged and obsolete sanctuary lighting controller system with a modern system. Currently, work is underway to procure and install the system.
- Board member training was conducted on January 30, 2016.



The Board represents the membership of the United Parish. Please feel free to contact any Board member or Pastor Chris with your ideas, suggestions and/or concerns.

## CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY (CYF)



**SEEDS** While Winter SEEDS only met three times, everyone enjoyed the different activities we did as we all learned how to live the “Fruit of the Spirit” from **Galatians 5:22-23**. We made sun mobiles that represented the joy we have in knowing God, sang and played chimes to “Down in My Heart and made “Fruit of the Spirit” placemats to use at our Lenten dinners.

We opened each session by singing “Keep the Faith”, which was shared with the congregation during worship on February 7. The kids also enjoyed singing “Fruit of the Spirit” and are able to name all of them: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Thanks to the following who helped with meals: Shirley Bickel, Alex and Judith Christopher, Chris Deacon, Joey and Terry Drown, and Tanya Settles.

Spring SEEDS begins on Wednesday, April 13 and will continue through May 11. We will be using Cokesbury’s “G-Force” to explore God’s love in action. If you feel that God might be calling you to be a part of the SEEDS ministry, please see Diane Eades or Sue Kennedy.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** In January, the elementary class began using *Growing in Grace and Gratitude*, a curriculum rooted in the foundation of Presbyterian identity where God’s grace and our gratitude are the heartbeat of our faith, life and worship. It inspires children to learn and practice hospitality, generosity, and love that reaches beyond Sunday morning, and encourages children to live their lives as an expression of God’s grace.

We have been studying about Jesus as a boy in the temple, about Jesus being baptized, and about Jesus preaching in the temple. We’ve been doing lots of arts and crafts related to these stories (making scrolls and posters with symbols of baptism). In the coming weeks we will be talking about who our neighbors are, Zacchaeus and Easter as well as learning the books of the New Testament.

The youth has begun using the Connect Series, a topical, activity-based resource to help our youth explore life and Christian faith. Topics include: **Discipleship: What is It; Discovery our Gifts; Media, Visions, Voices, and Choices; Strange Stuff in the Bible; and Is Life Fair?**

Thanks to Heather Deacon for teaching the elementary class, and Gene Barbato and Shirley Bickel for teaching the youth. The CYF encourages all of you to consider if God might be calling you to be a part of the Sunday School Team of Teachers. Please see Pastor Chris or Sue Kennedy if you are interested.



## Ongoing Ministries

### Worship and Christian Education

Worship Service- Worship will be at 10:00 a.m. with nursery available  
 + 1st Sunday Communion  
 + 3rd Sunday (*usually*) Children's Sermon w/ Puppets;  
 Time with Children all other Sundays  
 Choir Wed. 7:30 p.m. and Sunday 9:30 a.m.  
 Adult Education- Sundays 11:15 -12:00 p.m.  
 Sunday School- Sundays 11:15- 12:00 p.m.  
 Seeds of Worship Family mid-week ministry program at UPB.  
 Wednesday 6:00—7:15 p.m.

### Mission and Service

Crisis Center Meal UPB provides Family Crisis Center dinner. Sign up to bring a part of the meal 3rd Sunday bring your donation to UPB.  
 Bowie Food Pantry Please bring your non-perishable food donation, paper goods, baby items (diapers/wipes), and toiletries to the basket in the Narthex. Thanks for your generous giving.

### Fellowship

Chat & Chew Food and fellowship time: after worship. 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays in the Narthex  
 Men's Breakfast: 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday 7:45 a.m. Nautilus Diner, Crofton  
 Men's Night Out: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 6:30 p.m. (Location TBA)  
 Book Club: 1<sup>st</sup> Friday night of the month at the Barbato home  
 Ladies Luncheon: 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday 11:30 a.m. Olive Garden  
 Ladies Night Out: 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday 6:30 p.m. Old Bowie Town Grille

## 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!*

February 24, March 2,9,16	Lenten dinner and Intergenerational Devotional
March 12	Theology on Tap- Movie: "Risen" and dinner
March 19	Warm Nights meal at Village Baptist
March 24 (7:30 p.m.)	Maundy Thursday Service
March 25 (7:30 p.m.)	Good Friday Service
March 27 (10 a.m.)	Easter Sunday Service
June 4	Bowiefest
June 26	Church in the Park
July 10-16	Mars Hill Mission Trip
July 25 -29	Art and Music camp



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Visit us on the web at [www.unitedparishbowie.org](http://www.unitedparishbowie.org) or on Facebook  
or contact UPB at 301-249-6411 or [ckdeacon@yahoo.com](mailto:ckdeacon@yahoo.com).