

Potomac Presbyterian Church
10301 River Road
Potomac, MD 20854

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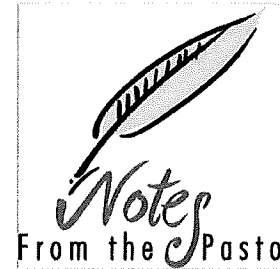
The Steeple to People

Potomac Presbyterian Church

A spiritual destination within a growing congregation.

February 2015

"Crossing the Jordan"



In January, the 2015 Session and Board of Deacons gathered for a day long retreat in Fellowship Hall. In preparation for the retreat, I give our officers a book to read—*Transforming Congregational Culture* by Anthony Robinson. Robinson's thesis is that the church has moved out of "the era of civic faith," when, as he describes it, "Christianity was the established religion of the society, and it was with these customs that most previous generations of Americans had grown up. There were regional exceptions and variations, but this was enough the norm that we can speak of—American Christendom." Today, as Robinson rightly suggests, we are in a different

era, one in which church is no longer supported by culture, and to be the church today requires new and creative thinking, courageous leadership, and a renewed commitment to the local community.

All that is fine and good—but what does any of that mean for Potomac Presbyterian Church today? The officers began to wrestle with these questions in assessing our worship, Christian education, mission/service, and fellowship/hospitality. There was great conversation, and there were important questions being asked:

- How will we connect regularly with more of our children and youth both on Sunday mornings and throughout the week?
- How can our worship continue to incorporate the faith stories and testimonies of our members and friends?
- How will we expand our adult education, giving more adults in our congregation opportunities for Christian formation?
- What does our local community want/need, and how can we begin to expand our presence in the community through mission and education?

In the second half of our morning, Communications Specialist Pat Royal discussed our current communications vehicles, places where we are expanding our communication, and areas where we can improve. While the Steeple to People, Thursday Spirit, and Monday morning First Light remain essential communications vehicles, in 2015 we will look toward enhancing our social media presence through not only our PPC Facebook page, but Twitter and Instagram as well.

In the afternoon, the Board of Deacons, led by Jon Davies, made plans for the coming year and welcomed new Deacons Carl Atwood, Melissa Grigorian, and Jane Stanton. The Session gathered for Bible study and reflection about the nature of church leadership, while welcoming new officers Hyun Lee, Jodi McGill, Susan Pereles, and Charlie Nahabedian.

Potomac Presbyterian Church

Rev. Sean Miller, Pastor

Rev. Kendra Grams, Associate Pastor for Family Ministries

Tom Andrew, Director of Music and Organist

301-299-6007, www.potomacpresbyterian.org

*We are an active Christian community devoted to
worship that stirs the soul,
education that engages the mind,
and service that sends us into the world*

Closing worship gave our officers an opportunity to pray for our congregation, our members, and the work that is ahead in 2015. One of the Scriptures used during worship was from Joshua 1, when Joshua prepares to take God's people across the Jordan River, into the land that had been promised to them.

Today, taking the church across the Jordan river, from the era of "civic faith" into the era of what Robinson calls, "the era of human transformation" is a daunting task, for a younger generation understands the role of church in society far differently than their parents' or grandparents' generation. Yet, our officers all recognized that this is a tremendously exciting time to be in leadership at PPC, sensing the vibrant spirit and excitement with which we gather on Sunday mornings, the passion with which we serve in our communities, and our shared yearning that our children and youth come to know and love Christ through worship, education, and service.

May the Lord continue to inspire us and challenge us in the year ahead! ~ Rev. Sean Miller

Here's a huge "Thank You" to all PPC musicians who provided music during the Advent and Christmas seasons recently – we were all blessed by your gifts!

- **The Children's Choir** sang during Advent Worship Services and Advent Lessons and Carols, plus the Christmas Pageant and the 5:00pm Christmas Eve Service.
- **The Bell Choir** played during Advent Lessons and Carols, and during the 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service.
- **The Sanctuary Choir**, in addition to all Sunday morning services, sang during Advent Lessons and Carols, and at the 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service.
- Our Section Leaders, **Jenny and Greg Robertson**, and **Judy Andrew**, offered music for the Longest Night of the Year Service and during the 11:00pm Christmas Eve Service.
- **Chan Chung** played the saw with his grandsons **Gavin and Max May** at 5:00pm on Christmas Eve; and also at 7:00pm with **Jason McFeaters** and his saxophone.
- **Derek Smith, Jason McFeaters, and Sebsatian McFeaters** offered "O Holy Night" during the 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service.
- **Brian Eng and Carolyn McGill** sang at the 5:00 and 11:00pm Christmas Eve Services
- **Kayla Mason** sang during the 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service.

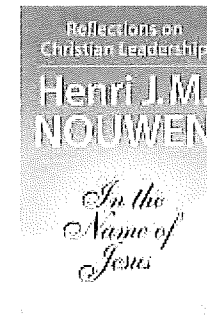


How fortunate we are to have so many talented musicians in our midst! Again, thank you all for sharing your gifts with us during the Christmas Season.

Tom Andrew
Director of Music & Organist

LIBRARY NEWS

In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership, by Henri J. M. Nouwen



Speaking from his personal experiences as a priest at a L'Arche community for the mentally handicapped, Henri Nouwen, in this small volume details his thoughts on true Christian leadership. He reflects on two stories from the Gospels: the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11) and the story of Peter's call to be a shepherd (John 21:15-19).

When Nouwen moved from a world of academia, connections, and reputations – Harvard - to a place where he could no longer use his developed skills with these broken, wounded souls, he found that his real self lay "naked." He was forced to rediscover his true identity - to let go of the desire to be relevant and popular, maybe even spectacular - and become vulnerable, open to receive and give love.

Just as Jesus resisted the temptation to be relevant and turn stones into bread in the desert, so too Christian leaders today feel despair at seemingly having little impact in our secular world. But the true Christian leaders will claim their irrelevance in the contemporary world and bring the unconditional and unlimited love of God - "God's first love" - to his people, adopt the discipline of contemplative prayer and undertake the task of "feeding my sheep" in the role of "servant-leader", as Jesus instructed Peter.

Nouwen says the Christian leader is one with outstretched hands who chooses a life of downward mobility, thoughtful prayer, is both vulnerable and trusting and acts in the name of Jesus.

WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS...



We continue to keep in our prayers... We continue to keep in our prayers... the *Members of the Armed Forces; Mary Reichley; Preston Abee*, brother-in-law of Julie McMahon; *Alison Galbreath; Dave Gorman*, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; *Betsy Sanders and Naomi Gerwin*, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; *Terry Fortune*, son-in-law of Martha Brame; *Patty Dunnavant; Ed Ebert; Genie Rudmann*, cousin of Dan Dowd; *Del Smith; Greg Bonnette*, father of Natalie Rudnic; *Abby Miano*, future sister-in-law of Mary Simonds.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the congregation is scheduled for **Sunday, February 8, 2015**. Lunch will be provided by the Fellowship Committee.

The Annual Report will be available electronically and a link to the report will be sent via the Thursday Spirit. If you would like a hard copy mailed to your home, please contact the church office by phone (301-299-6007) or email (admin@potomacpresbyterian.org).

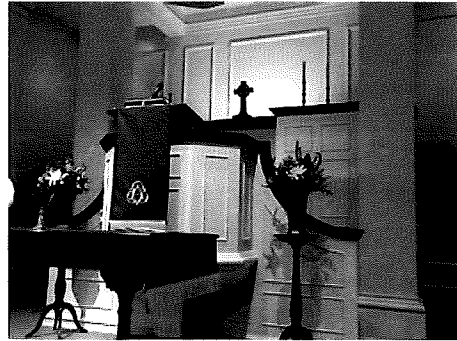
Printed copies will also be available for pick up.



Reserve your Hexagon tickets now!

Join your friends at PPC for a night out to see **Hexagon** on Saturday, March 28. Hexagon is celebrating its 60th

anniversary as Washington's only original political satirical musical comedy review and proceeds will benefit the DC Employment Justice Center. This is the 5th year a merry band of 20 PPC members will be heading out for dinner at Hunter's Inn and then off to enjoy the Hexagon show, which will be at Wilson High School. Contact Kathy Jeffers (EKathyMeyer@comcast.net; 301-461-4539) to reserve your tickets (\$23/per person)--first come first served!



Please consider donating an arrangement of beautiful Sanctuary flowers in memory or in honor of loved ones. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the hall leading into Fellowship Hall with Sundays that are available. Please clearly write the name(s) of those in whose memory or honor the flowers are being donated. The cost of donating flowers each week is \$40 per arrangement, and you may purchase flowers using a pew envelope with "Flower Donation" written on the outside.

If you would like to take the flowers home after worship, please check the appropriate box on the sign up sheet. Otherwise, flowers will be shared by our dedicated team of Flower Sharers and given to those who have been recently hospitalized or are otherwise in need.



How to Stay Connected at PPC

- Weekly bulletins and announcements
- Weekly email *Thursday Spirit* – Brief email highlighting upcoming events and activities
- Weekly email Monday Morning *First Light* – Email summarizing Sunday's worship message
- *Steeple to People* Newsletters – detailed monthly/bimonthly newsletters mailed to your home
- PPC Website – www.potomacpresbyterian.org – up-to-date church calendar and announcements
- Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Potomac-Presbyterian-Church/107071105994420>

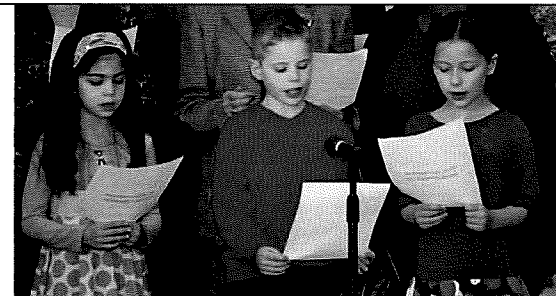
If you are not receiving the Steeple to People, please let the office know, admin@potomacpresbyterian.org.

If you are not receiving Thursday Spirit or First Light, at the bottom of the web page is a button. Click on that to subscribe or resubscribe.

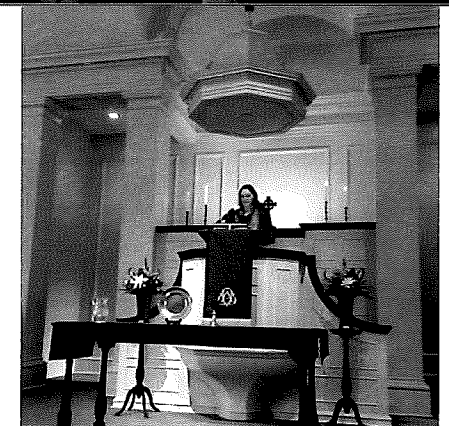
Join Our Email List



Christmas Pageant, December 21, 2014



Youth Sunday, January 25, 2015



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Youth and Children - Sundays at 9:45am

Preschool (ages 3&up) & Kindergarten; Grades 1&2; and Grades 3-5—lower level Christian Education wing. Classes include time with Bible stories, various creative projects, music, and games.

Middle School (grades 6-8)—upper level classrooms above Fellowship Hall. Classes include Bible study and reflections on Christian living.

Confirmation (for youth in grade 8 or above)—upper level classrooms above Fellowship Hall. Program includes weekly class, mission projects, mentoring, and retreats.

Adults - Faith Matters, Sundays at 9:45am in the Parlor

Come for prayer and discussion about the Scripture passages that will be read in worship on Sunday mornings. All questions will be emailed the Thursday before in the PPC Thursday Spirit.

Adults - Forum Discussions, Sundays at 9:45am in the Library

February 8, 15, 22—Rev. John Yieh, Professor in New Testament, Virginia Theological Seminary

Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study—meets in the Parlor on Wednesday mornings from 6:30-7:15am. All are welcome to join us for 45 minutes of Bible study and prayer. Coffee and bagels provided.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study—meets in the Library on Wednesday mornings from 9:30-11:00am. All are invited for a time of Bible study and prayer led by Pastor Sean. We are studying the Old Testament book of 1 Samuel.

Men's Book Club

The group meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10:30am in the church parlor. PPC members and non-members are welcome! Contact Bob Plumb (potomacplu@gmail.com) or Ed Tennent (tennentmail@yahoo.com) with questions. Books that will be discussed in the coming months are:

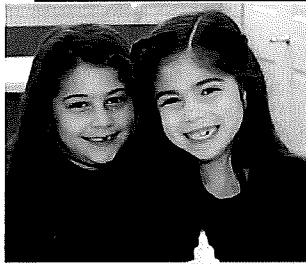
February 17, 2015—*Robinson Crusoe*, by Daniel Defoe

March 17, 2015—*The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*, by Elizabeth Kolbert

Presbyterian Association on Science, Technology, and the Christian Faith

PASTCF is a national organization for the discussion of the impact of science and technology on religion, especially Christianity. PPC's PASTCF chapter will meet on Saturday, February 7, at 9:00am in the library. Contact John Norvell (norvelli@msn.com) or Dave Stump (dcstump@ymail.com) with questions.

Pictures from the Advent Intergenerational Advent Christian Education, December 21, 2014



WANTED: HOSPITALITY PRACTITIONERS

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” Romans 12:13

The Community Ministry of Montgomery County has once again offered PPC the opportunity to practice hospitality by providing hearty and delicious meals and warm fellowship to the residents of the Wilkins Avenue Women’s Assessment Center (formerly the Community Based Shelter) in Rockville the week of **March 1 through March 7**. Our congregation will provide breakfast supplies and bag lunches, and prepare and serve dinners each day during the week to 36 women, who attend professional or treatment programs each day and work diligently on the issues related to their homelessness.

A sign-up sheet will be posted in Fellowship Hall during the coffee hours on February 8, 15, and 22, for those who are able to assist, and a shopping list of pantry staples and toiletries will also be available. You may also call Janet Dunlop at (301) 838-0583 or e-mail her at janetdunlop@comcast.net to volunteer or to obtain additional information. If you have been looking for a mission project in which the entire family can participate – this is the project for you.

For many years, PPC has steadfastly and enthusiastically supported our neighbors at the WAWAC. We hope that you will join with the Mission Committee, once again, to share your time and your talents by serving the Lord’s people who are in need.

PPC AT SOPHIA HOUSE

Sophia House, in Rockville, is a congregation and community supported shelter that provides rehabilitative services for homeless women in our community. PPC volunteers deliver meals for 30 homeless women on the first Sunday of every month to be served at 6:30pm. Please sign up on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall for a month in 2015. Please contact Marnel Williams (wmarnel@aol.com) with questions.



2015 MISSION TRIP - SUNDAY, JUNE 21-SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 2015, ATHENS, OHIO

WHAT: Serving with Good Works, Inc. (<http://good-works.net>). The vision of Good Works is to create a "community of hope" with and for people who are struggling with poverty and homelessness in rural Appalachia. As a Christian community, they are seeking to grow in love for God and neighbor.

Good Works engages in a number of projects in the community. They run a homeless shelter, a resource center for people struggling with poverty, long term transitional housing for single adults moving toward independence and self-sufficiency, community meals for the homeless and rural poor, a home repair program for seniors and people with disabilities, summer programming and lunches for children in poverty, and more. Our mission team will have the opportunity to assist with many of these diverse programs.



MISSION TRIP 2014



WHO: Adults, college students, and youth going into grade 9 or above in the fall of 2015 are invited to participate.

HOW: Participants are asked to contribute \$300. Scholarships are available (talk with Pastor Kendra or Pastor Sean privately to request a confidential scholarship). **A non-refundable deposit of \$50 is due with the participant covenant to register.** Registration deadline is Sunday, March 1, 2015.

All trip participants are required to participate in the entire duration of the trip and all pre-trip and post-trip events, including:

- High School Retreat (February 27-March 1)
- Service learning opportunities—including serving at Sophia House, participating in PPC's Spring Mission Project, and/or participating in PPC's local mission project to assist families experiencing poverty
- Mission Team Commissioning in worship on Sunday, June 21, 10:00am
- Mission Team leading worship on Sunday, June 28, 10:00am

More information and specifics available on the website

<http://www.potomacpresbyterian.org/giving/mission/mission-trip-2015-athens-ohio/>

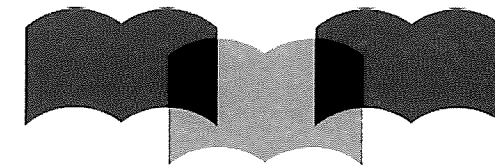
Contact Eric Van Brunt with questions, eric.vanbrunt@gmail.com

On Saturday, March 21, from 10:00am-4:00pm, all the women of PPC are warmly invited to retreat for the day to the Garrett Park Town Hall. In preparation for Holy Week, the Rev. Dr. Margee Iddings will lead us to consider "WHEN A SCULPTURE TELLS A STORY (and we realize it may be our story!)—Mary of Bethany's Anointing of Jesus." During the retreat, we will explore the context for Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet, interact with sculpture depicting this story, and uncover ways that our story intersects. The cost of the retreat is \$35/person. (Check for \$35 made out to Potomac Presbyterian Church, "Women's Retreat" in memo line.)



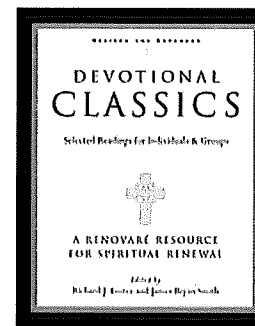
- Register by Sunday, March 14.
- Sign up on sign-up sheet in the Narthax, or email Jeanne Grillo (admin@potomacpresbyterian.org).
- Questions to Susan Hougen (shougen29@gmail.com)

The Rev. Dr. Margee Iddings was ordained in 1976, one of the first 100 women to be ordained by the Presbyterians. A graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York City and San Francisco Seminary, she has served numerous congregations in National Capital Presbytery during her career. Now retired, Margee celebrates the 12 years that she had the privilege of creating a spiritual retreat center—Rising Phoenix—in the mountains of western Maryland. She delights in leading retreats, mentoring young woman in ministry, and advocating for justice, especially for women.



Men's Bible STUDY

The Men's Bible Study meets in the Parlor on Wednesday mornings from 6:30-7:15am.



- Weekly studies are based on discussion of chapters in the book "Devotional Classics". We have extra copies of the book, and we are happy to share. (Books in Sean's office)
- All are welcome – the study is structured such that it's easy to drop-in since the chapters are discreet, stand alone pieces
- Short, 4-6 page chapters allow readers to spend a few minutes or a few hours on depending on available time
- It is not a question of whether you can afford the time to come, rather can you afford the time NOT to come... Great discussion that will Brighten the Day – guaranteed!

February 2015

February 2015							March 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
							29	30	31				

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb 1 - 7	Feb 1 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Refreshments 12:15pm 1:15pm Board of Deacons Meeting (Parlor) 6:00pm 8:00pm PPC Family Serv	2 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	3 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 6:00pm 10:00pm Compassionate Friends	4 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Room 4)	5 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	6	7 9:00am 10:30am PASTCF (Library)
	8 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 2:00pm Annual Meeting and Congregational Luncheon	9 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 3:30pm 4:45pm GS Troop 3788 (Jennifer LaRoche) 6:00pm 7:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm 9:30pm Committee Meetings	10 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 7:00pm 9:00pm Stephen Ministry Supervision and CE (parlor)	11 Lenten STP mailing 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 3:45pm 5:30pm GS Troop 642 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir 6:30pm 10:00pm Montgomery B	12 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	13 6:00pm 9:00pm Middle School Youth Group	14
Feb 8 - 14	15 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Refreshments 12:30pm 2:30pm Session Meeting (Library)	16 President's Day - office closed	17 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 10:30am 12:00pm Men's Book Club (Parlor) 7:30pm 9:00pm Endowment Committee (Library)	18 Ash Wednesday 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday M 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (L 3:45pm 5:30pm GS Troop 642 6:30pm 7:30pm Communication 7:30pm 8:30pm Ash Wednesday	19 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 4:00pm 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop (Fellowship Hall) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	20	21 9:00am 12:00pm Reformed Institute Board Meeting
	22 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship - Scout Sunday 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Ref 12:15pm 1:30pm Senior High Lu 4:30pm 5:30pm Pastor Sean and 5:00pm 7:00pm Family Potluck (23 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	24 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 7:00pm 9:00pm Stephen Ministry Supervision and CE (parlor)	25 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Room 4) 7:30pm 8:30pm Evening Lenten Service	26 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	27 7:30pm Sr. High Retreat (Drumheller's House) To Mar 1 ➔	28
Feb 22 - 28							

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The Steeple to People

Potomac Presbyterian Church

A spiritual destination within a growing congregation.

February/March 2015



Ash Wednesday, February 18
7:30pm Worship with Communion
"Get Out of Your Own Way" Matthew 6:1-6

Wednesdays in Lent
7:30pm in the Sanctuary
Scripture, Silence, and Song

First Sunday in Lent, February 22

11:00am Worship, "From Baptism to Temptation and Back Again" Mark 1:9-15

Second Sunday in Lent, March 1

11:00am Communion Worship, "For Christ's Sake" Mark 8:31-38

Third Sunday in Lent, March 8

11:00am Worship, "Holy Anger" John 2:13-22

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 15

11:00am Worship, "Are You Born Again?" John 3:14-21

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 22

11:00am Worship, "A Dark Night of the Soul" John 12:27-29

Holy Week

Palm Sunday,
March 29

11:00am Worship
"An Unlikely Entrance"
Mark 11:1-11

Maundy Thursday, April 2

6:30pm Light Supper
7:30pm Worship
"Were You There?"
John 13

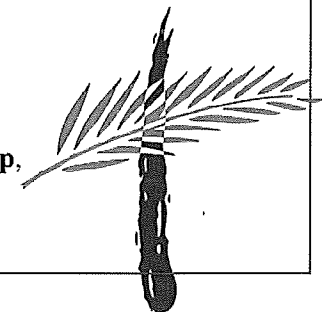
Good Friday,
April 3

7:30pm Tenebrae

Easter Sunday, April 5

9:00am & 11:00am Communion Worship,
"The Perfect Ending" Mark 16:1-8

10:15am Egg Hunt



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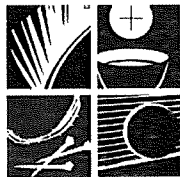
Wednesdays in Lent

7:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Scripture, Silence, and Song

All are invited to gather on Wednesdays in Lent, for a time of worship beginning at 7:30 pm. Wednesday evening worship will be simple in format, including readings of Lenten Scripture, song, and silence. The Sanctuary will be available for prayer before worship begins, and following worship, you will be invited to remain in the Sanctuary for silent prayer and meditation.

Why not set aside Wednesday evenings at 7:30 during Lent on your calendar as one way that you will mark the season this year? I look forward to these times as we turn inward to consider our own journeys of faith and looking outward to the son of God, who walks a lonesome valley "a long way from home." ~Pastor Sean



Intergenerational Christian Education - On Palm Sunday, March 29, everyone is invited to participate in our intergenerational Christian Education event in the Fellowship Hall beginning at 9:45am. There will be various activity stations where young and old alike will be invited to engage with the stories of Holy Week through books, crafts, prayer, songs, and other activities. Plan to attend as a family to enjoy this time of reflection and activities as we enter Holy Week.

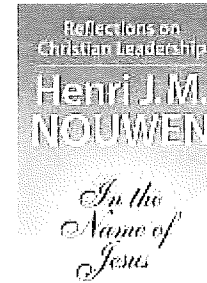
Easter Egg Hunt: Sunday, April 5, 10:15am - Stay following the 9:00am service or come early for the 11:00am service! The entire congregation is invited to the church lawn as the children of the church help us all remember the surprise and wonder of Easter by hunting for Easter Eggs and discovering what surprises they hold. Please bring a basket in which to collect the eggs. Older children who will not be "hunting eggs," youth, and adults are invited at 9:40am to help hide eggs!

The symbols in the sanctuary are a reminder of our Lord's journey to the cross

- The *aloe plant* represents the time Jesus spent in the desert and His power of healing; the *purple cloth* symbolizes the royal robes the people used to mock Jesus; the *crown of thorns* reminds us of the painful cruelty and what was placed on Jesus' head at the crucifixion; the large *cross* represents Christ's physical death and the *primitive cup and plate* on the communion table calls to mind Jesus' last supper with his friends, "Do this in remembrance of me...". The small stones are something to carry with you throughout the season as a reminder of Jesus' resolution to take his path to the cross and the weight of our own sin. In Luke 9:51, the Scriptures say that Jesus "resolutely set his face", so we use a small stone to remind us of Jesus' resolution in his journey to the cross. If you have not already done so, please take one of the small stones located in the basket just outside the sanctuary home with you as a reminder of our sin and God's forgiveness.

LIBRARY NEWS

In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership, by Henri J. M. Nouwen



Speaking from his personal experiences as a priest at a L'Arche community for the mentally handicapped, Henri Nouwen, in this small volume details his thoughts on true Christian leadership. He reflects on two stories from the Gospels: the story of Jesus' temptation in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11) and the story of Peter's call to be a shepherd (John 21:15-19).

When Nouwen moved from a world of academia, connections, and reputations – Harvard - to a place where he could no longer use his developed skills with these broken, wounded souls, he found that his real self lay "naked." He was forced to rediscover his true identity - to let go of the desire to be relevant and popular, maybe even spectacular - and become vulnerable, open to receive and give love.

Just as Jesus resisted the temptation to be relevant and turn stones into bread in the desert, so too Christian leaders today feel despair at seemingly having little impact in our secular world. But the true Christian leaders will claim their irrelevance in the contemporary world and bring the unconditional and unlimited love of God - "God's first love" - to his people, adopt the discipline of contemplative prayer and undertake the task of "feeding my sheep" in the role of "servant-leader", as Jesus instructed Peter.

Nouwen says the Christian leader is one with outstretched hands who chooses a life of downward mobility, thoughtful prayer, is both vulnerable and trusting and acts in the name of Jesus.

WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS...



We continue to keep in our prayers... We continue to keep in our prayers... the *Members of the Armed Forces; Mary Reichley; Preston Abee*, brother-in-law of Julie McMahon; *Alison Galbreath; Dave Gorman*, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; *Betsy Sanders* and *Naomi Gerwin*, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; *Terry Fortune*, son-in-law of Martha Brame; *Patty Dunnivant; Ed Ebert; Genie Rudmann*, cousin of Dan Dowd; *Del Smith; Greg Bonnette*, father of Natalie Rudnic; *Abby Miano*, future sister-in-law of Mary Simonds.

How to Stay Connected at PPC

- Weekly bulletins and announcements
- Weekly email Thursday Spirit – Brief email highlighting upcoming events and activities
- Weekly email Monday Morning First Light – Email summarizing Sunday's worship message
- Steeple to People Newsletters – detailed monthly/bimonthly newsletters mailed to your home
- PPC Website – www.potomacpresbyterian.org – up-to-date church calendar and announcements
- Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Potomac-Presbyterian-Church/107071105994420>

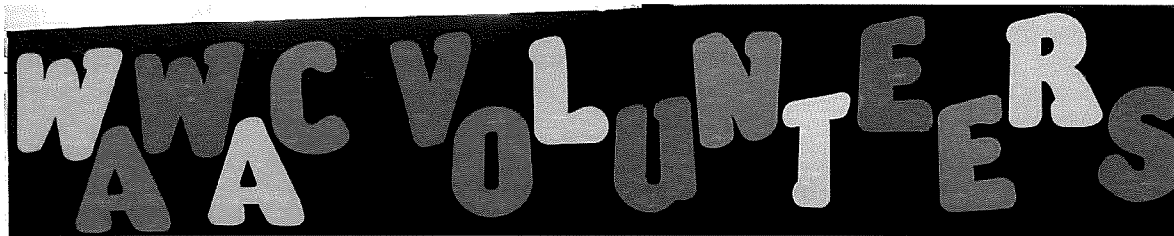
MISSION OPPORTUNITIES



2015 Mission Trip - Sunday, June 21-Saturday, June 27, 2015, Athens, Ohio
Adults, college students, and youth going into grade 9 or above in the fall of 2015 are invited to participate in summer mission trip to Athens, Ohio, where we will serve with Good Works, Inc. (<http://good-works.net/>). The vision of Good Works is to create a "community of hope" with and for people who are struggling with poverty and homelessness in rural Appalachia. As a Christian community, they are seeking to grow in love for God and neighbor.

Good Works engages in a number of projects in the community. They run a homeless shelter, a resource center for people struggling with poverty, long term transitional housing for single adults moving toward independence and self-sufficiency, community meals for the homeless and rural poor, a home repair program for seniors and people with disabilities, summer programming and lunches for children in poverty, and more. Our mission team will have the opportunity to assist with many of these diverse programs.

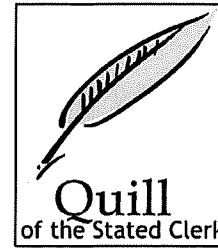
Registration deadline is Sunday, March 1, 2015. More information and specifics available on the website. Contact Eric Van Brunt with questions, eric.vanbrunt@gmail.com.



"Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality." Romans 12:13

The Community Ministry of Montgomery County has once again offered PPC the opportunity to practice hospitality by providing hearty and delicious meals and warm fellowship to the residents of the Wilkins Avenue Women's Assessment Center (formerly the Community Based Shelter) in Rockville the week of **March 1 through March 7**. Our congregation will provide breakfast supplies and bag lunches, and prepare and serve dinners each day during the week to 36 women, who attend professional or treatment programs each day and work diligently on the issues related to their homelessness.

A sign-up sheet is posted in Fellowship Hall during the coffee hours on February 8, 15, and 22, for those who are able to assist. More information is available on the website, under "News and Events/Church News". You may also contact Janet Dunlop at 301-838-0583 or janetdunlop@comcast.net with questions or more information. If you have been looking for a mission project in which the entire family can participate – this is the project for you.



Susan Haynes, Clerk of Session

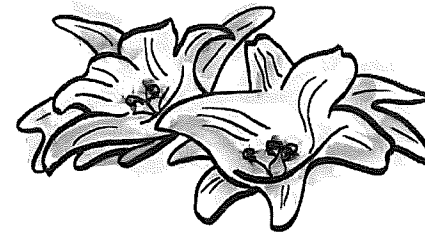
The Session met for its regular January meeting with the new team for 2015. The focus of the meetings this year will be the three initiatives of Mission Development, enhanced Christian Education offerings, and managing the volunteer efforts of the church members. There will be many opportunities for church members to be active in a variety of ways, and everyone is encouraged to find the program or event that is most meaningful. Positioning Potomac Presbyterian Church as an integral part of the local community, as well as a spiritual leader, will also be addressed.

Elder Cliff Kendall presented the Operating Budget for 2015. Several pledges are still outstanding, but the presented budget was approved. The funding for the parking lot expansion will come for the Firm Foundation, Shining Future campaign. The church will undergo an annual financial audit as part of the regular operations.

Elder Tom Cookerly presented the 2015 Terms of Call for Pastor Sean. This were discussed and approved at the Annual Congregational Meeting on February 8, 2014. Salary increases for other church staff were approved. The Financial Secretary, Seana Hilley, has resigned effective January 25, 2014. The Personnel Committee is exploring alternatives for a replacement. Jeanne Grillo has assumed these duties at this time.

Other business included the report of the installation of a sound system in Fellowship Hall, a discussion about the part-time clergy position to be filled this year in support of adult Christian Education and an evaluation of the use of Sunday School teachers for the youth. The Attendance report showed the average attendance for worship service to be 161. The Christmas Eve services hosted 488 people in three services, a slight increase over last year. Additional information is available from your Elder representatives.

EASTER FLOWER FUND



Honor a loved one or celebrate a special event with a contribution toward flowers for Easter Sunday. we are planning on featuring spring flowering bulbs and lilies. Dedications will be listed in our Easter Sunday Bulletin. Please make a note on the pew envelopes that it is for Easter Flower Fund and include your dedication phrase. You may either place your envelope in the offering plate or mail/return to the church office. Checks should be made out to "Potomac Presbyterian Church." **The last date for contributions is**

Sunday, March 29.

Please note there will not be fresh flowers in the Sanctuary during Lent. For those who have made a normal flower donation during Lent, your dedication will be listed in the bulletin and the funds will be used for a flower arrangement in Fellowship Hall

FIRM FOUNDATION SHINING FUTURE UPDATE

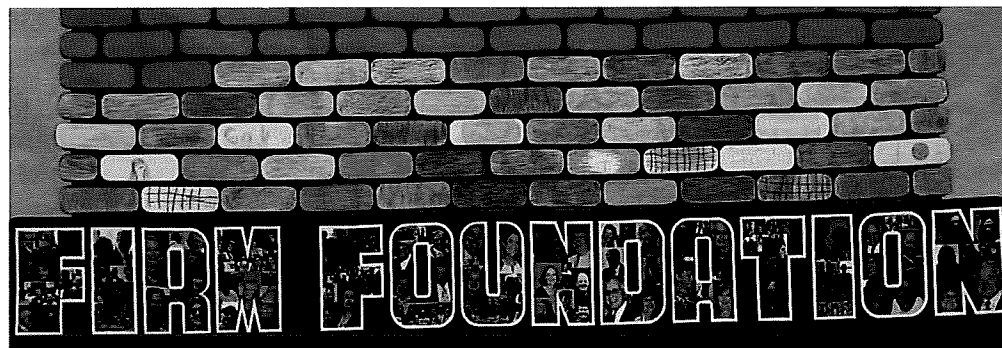
Your Connections Team (CT) provided a Firm Foundation Shining Future (FFSF) campaign update at the annual meeting last Sunday evidenced by the new FFSF banner in Fellowship Hall; thanks to the creative genius of Lynda Tennent! This banner will track collections of all campaign pledges. Thanks goes to our Sunday school children who made the bricks on the banner, each of which represents nearly \$20,000 of campaign cash collected. You will see that 71% or \$1,144,207 of the nearly \$1.6 million in pledges has been collected; including \$435,922 or 27% which was received during 2014. We are reminded that the strength of PPC is its members, pictures of who comprise the strong banner foundation. Thank you! None of this could have happened without you.

Please review your 2014 year end statement from the church Financial Secretary to confirm that your contributions were accurately allocated between the FFSF Capital Campaign and the Annual Stewardship Campaign. The multi-faceted CT role includes assisting Session and the relevant committees in predicting the timing of campaign cash receipts since they have to make forward financial commitments for the projects to be funded by the campaign. Many members have paid their pledges in full while many others are paying over two or three years so as to conclude on or before the end of 2016. Only the Financial Secretary has the confidential amount of each pledge. However, the CT monitors the cumulative percentage paid for each pledge. We will touch base with those few members who have yet to begin their payments to request guidance in their payment intentions for this cash budgeting purpose.

PPC has eleven new members since the conclusion of the FFSF Campaign; several of whom have committed to the FFSF Campaign. We will reach out to the other new members to ask if they have any questions and to ensure that they have an opportunity to consider participation in this major initiative in the life of our Church.

Finally, new pledges are still welcomed from everyone! If you were not able to pledge in fall 2013, please consider doing so now. Alternatively, if you are in a position to increase your pledge from that made in late 2013, please consider doing so. We can always make room for new bricks on our banner!

If you have questions, please contact Pastor Sean, Jeanne Grillo, our interim Financial Secretary or any one of us. Thank you for your support in this critical endeavor and for everything you do to enrich the life of PPC. Respectfully, Gregg Johnson, Elsie Reid and Karen Wise



RETREAT OPPORTUNITIES



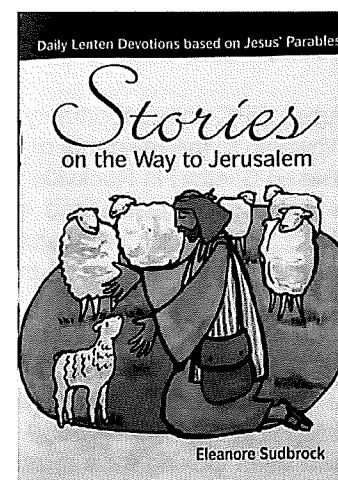
On Saturday, March 21, from 10:00am-4:00pm, all the women of PPC are warmly invited to retreat for the day to the Garrett Park Town Hall. In preparation for Holy Week, the Rev. Dr. Margee Iddings will lead us to consider "WHEN A SCULPTURE TELLS A STORY (and we realize it may be our story!)—Mary of Bethany's Anointing of Jesus." During the retreat, we will explore the context for Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet, interact with sculpture depicting this story, and uncover ways that our story intersects. The cost of the retreat is \$35/person. (Check for \$35 made out to Potomac Presbyterian Church, "Women's Retreat" in memo line.)

Register by Sunday, March 14, Sign up on sign-up sheet in the Narthax, or email Jeanne Grillo (admin@potomacpresbyterian.org). Questions to Susan Hougen (shougen29@gmail.com). More information available on the website.



High School students are invited to a retreat at the Drumheller home in St. Michaels, February 27-March 1. We'll depart PPC on Friday at 7:00pm. In St. Michaels, we'll have plenty of time to relax, play games, cook, and much more. In addition, we'll reflect on what it means to be a disciple of Christ in our daily lives. On Sunday, we will be back at PPC in time for 11:00am worship. Students who are planning to attend the retreat must RSVP to Jeanne Grillo (admin@potomacpresbyterian.org) no later than Sunday, February 15 (but earlier RSVPs are greatly preferred). Cost is \$20/ person (scholarships available).

MARKING LENT AT HOME FOR CHILDREN



For families with children in elementary school and below, the Christian Education Committee wanted you and your family to have a simple way to help you move meaningfully and faithfully together toward Easter at home. Lent is a special time set apart for us to turn toward God in preparation to celebrate God's great gift of new life given at Easter. It's a time for us to be particularly attentive to God. It has long been the tradition of Christians to mark Lent with fasting or the taking on of spiritual disciplines such as daily Bible reading or a special devotional time. This helps us "pay attention" to God during this special time of preparation. A Lenten devotional book and game board was mailed to families with young children so that you and your children have a simple and easy way to set aside a few moments each day to be more attentive to God. We encourage you to pick a time each day to read the day's devotional passage. We also encourage you to play the game

Family Potluck, February 22

Families are invited to a casual, potluck dinner on Sunday, February 22, from 5:00-7:00pm at the Gawronski home (11218 River View Drive, Potomac). Children will be invited to eat first and then will have time to play. Childcare will be provided during the children's playtime, so that parents will have a chance to relax and socialize. Please contact Louise Plumb, Chair of the Fellowship Committee (Lplumb@aol.com), or Jennifer Gawronski (jennifer@iljgroupplc.com) with questions.



Pancake Breakfast, Sunday, March 22, 8:45-10:15am

Come share a time of fellowship, friendship and food on Sunday March 22 when the men of PPC will be cooking a pancake breakfast for the congregation. Breakfast will be served continuously so you can come by before Sunday school or the service to enjoy time with your church family. A freewill offering will be available with proceeds going to Interfaith Works' Carroll House Men's Shelter. Any men interested in helping can contact Ed Pierson at edmpierson@gmail.com. Looking forward to seeing all of you there!

Dinner and the Theater, Saturday, March 28



Join your friends at PPC for a night out to see *Hexagon* on Saturday, March 28. Hexagon is celebrating its 60th anniversary as Washington's only original political satirical musical comedy review and proceeds will benefit the DC Employment Justice Center. This is the 5th year a merry band of 20 PPC members will be heading out for dinner at Hunter's Inn and then off to enjoy the Hexagon show, which will be at Wilson High School. Contact Kathy Jeffers (EKathyMeyer@comcast.net; 301-461-4539) to reserve your tickets (\$23/per person)--first come first served!

EDUCATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Adults - Forum Discussions, Sundays at 9:45am in the Library

February 8, 15, 22-Rev. John Yieh, Professor in New Testament, Virginia Theological Seminary; the title of the three sessions are: *God is Light, God is Righteous, God is Love*
March 1, 8, 15, 22-Rev. Bruce Douglas, *Contemporary Calvinism*

Men's Book Club

The group meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10:30am in the church parlor. PPC members and non-members are welcome! Contact Bob Plumb (potomacplu@gmail.com) or Ed Tennent (tennentmail@yahoo.com) with questions. Books that will be discussed in the coming months are:

February 17, 2015-*Robinson Crusoe*, by Daniel Defoe

March 17, 2015- *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*, by Elizabeth Kolbert

Presbyterian Association on Science, Technology, and the Christian Faith

PASTCF is a national organization for the discussion of the impact of science and technology on religion, especially Christianity. Our next PASTCF meeting is Saturday, March 21, at PPC at 9:00am. Our new book for our spring meetings is *The Meaning of Human Existence* by E. O. Wilson. The author is an outstanding Harvard scientist, who has received many scientific and literary awards. For our March 21 meeting, we suggest reading chapters 1, 2, 3, and 13. Contact John Norvelli (norvelli@msn.com) or Dave Stump (dcstump@ymail.com) with questions.



Jesus said, "Many are called but few are chosen." We Deacons are not so picky. The great news is that it is really easy to enter Deacon Kingdom! The two outreaches of the Office of Deacons, Congregational Care and Fellowship, are active committees. A dedicated but small number of PPC committee members take care of the entire congregation's care and hospitality needs. We want to share the opportunity to serve--to share the blessings of growing together as fellow Christians. Our committees are not exclusive clubs. We welcome your participation!

The **Congregational Care Committee** is chaired by Sonia Russo (soniaarusso@hotmail.com) and meets on the second Monday of each month in the Parlor, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Our next meeting is **March 9**. You can join our committee or help on an as-needed basis without attending meetings.

Congregational Care is looking for volunteers who can help with:

- Preparing meals for families dealing with illness, death, or new birth
- Visits with house- or institution-bound members
- Transportation for medical appointments
- "Tele-Care": sending e-mails, cards, or telephoning PPC members in times of difficulty
- Refreshments for memorial service receptions

Please look for a **sign-up sheet** in **Fellowship Hall**.

The **Fellowship Committee** is chaired by Louise Plumb (lplumb@aol.com) and meets on the second Monday of each month from 7:30 to 9:00, starting in the library. The Fellowship Committee is in need of new active members who can attend meetings regularly. We extend a heartfelt and sincere invitation to you to come on **March 9** to see all that we do. Come and learn, and be a part of our group!

Come, Join us! If you have ever enjoyed a Fellowship event at PPC, or have received Congregational Care when ill or grieving or after a birth, you know how vital these two Deacon ministries are.

Faithfully submitted on behalf of all your deacons, Sonia Russo

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PPC FAMILY!*

<i>March Birthdays</i>	<i>April Birthdays</i>	
Gwen Asbury	Charlie Nahabedian	Michael Shively
Lynda Tennent	Jonathan Davies	Tom Hougen
Imogen McMillan	Kyle Newton	John Clouse
Nancy Miller	Josh Stoltzfus	Gregg Johnson
Dahlia Ines Stoltzfus	Tad Asbury	Preston Kuhn
Catherine Dorman	Nels Ackerson	Sherry Johnson
Yingling	Jane Hill	Jung (Elisia) Lawrence
Arianna McFeaters	Susan Haynes	Camille Kendall
Audra Niskanen	Carole Hudgings	Nelia Scioli
Colin Davies	William Galbreath	Chasen Mindnich
Ed Pierson	Denise Pierson	Robert Mitchell
Grant Lawrence		Kayla Mason
Susan Pereles		
Harry Tovmassian		



*"Happy Birthday, PPC" is part of the ministry of the Congregational Care Committee. If you want to share your birthday, please sign up on one of the calendars in Fellowship Hall.

March 2015

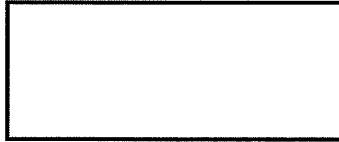
March 2015							April 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14	12	13	14	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	19	20	21	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	26	27	28	22	23	24	25
29	30	31								29	30		

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Mar 1 - 7	Mar 1 Sr. High Retreat (Drur) 11:00am Deadline to Register for Mission PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Ref	2 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	3 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 6:00pm 10:00pm Compassionate Friends	4 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday M 3:45pm 5:30pm GS Troop 642 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:30pm 8:30pm Evening Lenten	5 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir	6 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A World Day of Prayer	7 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A Stephen Rudnic Memorial Service
	Mar 8 - 14	8 PPC Serving Meals at Wilkens A 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Ref 12:15pm 1:30pm Senior High Lu	9 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 6:00pm 7:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm 9:30pm Committee Meetings	10 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 7:00pm 9:00pm Stephen Ministry Supervision and CE (parlor)	11 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:30pm 8:30pm Evening Lenten	12 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	13 6:00pm 9:00pm Middle School Youth Group
Mar 15 - 21		15 STP DEADLINE 9:30am 10:00am New Member 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 10:30am 10:45am Session - New 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Ref	16 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 3:30pm 4:45pm GS Troop 3788 (Jennifer LaRoche)	17 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 10:30am 12:00pm Men's Book Club (Parlor)	18 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday M 3:45pm 5:30pm GS Troop 642 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:30pm 8:30pm Evening Lenten	19 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 4:00pm 6:00pm Girl Scout Troop (Fellowship Hall) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir	20
	Mar 22 - 28	22 8:45am 10:15am Pancake Breakfast 9:45am 10:45am Christian Education 11:00am 12:00pm Worship - Dar 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Ref 12:15pm 1:30pm Senior High Lu 4:30pm 5:30pm Pastor Sean and	23 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	24 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 6:00pm 6:30pm Presbytery Meeting (National Presbyterian) 7:00pm 9:00pm Stephen Ministry Supervision and CE (25 6:30am 7:15am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am 11:00am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 4:30pm 5:15pm Children's Choir 7:30pm 8:30pm Evening Lenten	26 12:00pm 1:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm 7:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm 9:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	27
Mar 29 - Apr 4		29 Palm Sunday 9:45am 10:45am CE Intergenerational Event - no r 11:00am 12:00pm Worship 12:00pm 1:00pm Coffee and Refreshments	30 1:00pm 2:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	31 9:30am 12:00pm Art Class (Fellowship Hall)	Apr 1	2	3

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The Steeple to People

Potomac Presbyterian Church

A spiritual destination within a growing congregation.

April 2015



On Marriage and the PC(USA)

Two weeks ago, Palisades Presbytery cast the deciding vote on Amendment 14-F to the *Book of Order*, with a majority of presbyteries now having approved the recommendations of the 2014 General Assembly regarding changes to the constitutional definitions of marriage. A recent pastoral letter from the current Moderator and Vice Moderator of the PC(USA) describes these changes:

The approved amendment to the Book of Order lifts up the sanctity of marriage and the commitment of loving couples within the church. It also allows teaching elders [ministers] to exercise their pastoral discretion in officiating weddings and in doing so '... the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.'

Though we know that this amendment received the necessary majority for approval, we encourage the congregations, presbyteries, and synods of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to continue to be in conversation about marriage and family. We hope that such "up/down" voting does not mark the end, but the continuation of our desire to live in community; a partnership that requires prayer, the study of Scripture, listening to and with one another, and a dedication to partnership in the midst of our diversity of opinion.



Now that a majority of Presbyteries have voted to affirm the recommended changes to the definitions of marriage, Presbyterians across the country and in our own church community are reacting and responding to these changes. Some are overjoyed. Some are deeply troubled. Some are rather ambivalent. For all Presbyterians, it will take time for these changes to sink in.

What do these changes mean for Potomac Presbyterian Church? It is important to remember that all weddings held in the church have always been subject to the approval of the Session. And clergy are not bound to perform any wedding that he/she does not feel comfortable officiating based on the pastoral discretion of the individual pastor. The new language affirms the responsibility of the local congregation to make its own decisions and do its own discernment about weddings to be held in its sanctuary. And the new language affirms the historic Presbyterian principle of "freedom of conscience," which gives clergy the freedom to make individual decisions about whether or not to officiate a ceremony.

Beginning at our April meeting and over the next several weeks, the Session and I will be studying Biblical and theological materials on marriage and family in the Reformed tradition and to have the kind of conversations and "dedication to partnership" that the letter from our Moderator encourages. And I

Potomac Presbyterian Church

Rev. Sean Miller, Pastor

Rev. Kendra Grams, Associate Pastor for Family Ministries

Tom Andrew, Director of Music and Organist

301-299-6007, www.potomacpresbyterian.org

*We are an active Christian community devoted to
worship that stirs the soul,
education that engages the mind,
and service that sends us into the world*

invite you to speak with any member of the Session, Pastor Kendra, or me, with your thoughts, questions, concerns, or comments, regarding the marriage amendment.

Let me share my own perspective on the new language regarding marriage: Unlike other denominations that have made changes regarding the definition of marriage and same gender weddings over the last decade or so, the Presbyterian Church USA has approved new language which *does not demand uniformity on the issue*, but affirms that Presbyterians can and must live as the body of Christ in times of disagreement. Presbyterians on both sides of the issue will eloquently defend their position from Scripture. Presbyterians on both sides of this issue will defend their position from the perspective of our historic Reformed tradition. The new language about marriage affirms that while brothers and sisters in Christ may interpret Scripture and tradition very differently, we are better—stronger—as a denomination when both perspectives are represented and heard. We are better together.

In a paper produced recently by the Presbyterian Office of Theology and Worship, the authors describe this tension:

The challenging way we are charting requires deep commitment to the dignity of sisters and brothers with whom we disagree, combined with a commitment to shape and reshape our denomination's structures in ways that allow as many of us as possible to remain—in good conscience—within this particular denomination, together living the Christian faith in the PC(USA)'s distinctive way.¹

At the recent meeting of National Capital Presbytery, one of the commissioners came to the microphone and said, "The decision has already been made. The most important decision to make now is the next one: how we move forward in love."

Let us hold the church in prayer in this time of moving forward in love, as we seek to live into the hope of our Lord Jesus Christ in the light and joy of Easter.

Sean Miller

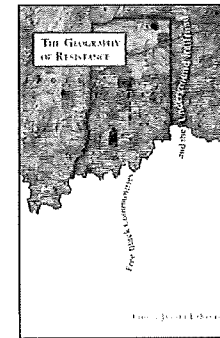
¹ [Our Challenging Way: Faithfulness, Sex, Ordination, and Marriage](#) by Barry Ensign-George and Charles Wiley, from the PC(USA) Office of Theology and Worship

HOW TO STAY CONNECTED AT PPC

- Weekly bulletins and announcements
- Weekly email *Thursday Spirit* – Brief email highlighting upcoming events and activities
- Weekly email Monday morning *First Light* – Email summarizing Sunday's worship message
- *Steeple to People* Newsletter – detailed monthly/bimonthly newsletters mailed to your home and available on the website
- PPC Website – www.potomacpresbyterian.org – up-to-date church calendar and announcements
- Facebook – Potomac Presbyterian Church

LIBRARY NEWS

Free Black Communities and the Underground Railroad: The Geography of Resistance Cheryl Janifer LaRoche



The Underground Railroad has been called "America's favorite legend". But Dr. Cheryl LaRoche, a historian and archaeologist, through her research in church histories, newspaper articles, biographies, oral narratives, convention records and church and organization minutes, offers an alternative account of the mechanisms of escape from slavery - one that links the Underground Railroad with Black churches, Black communities and fraternal societies such as Freemasonry. She states that it may well come to pass that the archaeological signature of the Underground Railroad will be the footprint of the Black church rather than the concealed tunnels and passageways that we know as the story of the Underground Railroad.

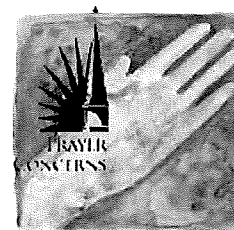
Escape as a response to slavery predated the formation of this nation - was apparent in the early laws of Virginia and New York. Blacks came together collectively in small rural communities seeking freedom from bondage long before the rise of the Underground Railroad. And it is these Black communities, their cultural landscape, and their strong leaders which are the focus of this book.

Further defining the subtitle of her book, *The Geography of Resistance*, LaRoche states that the landscape was a formidable weapon of oppression against Blacks in their escape as well as a site of liberation. Freedom was a place where danger lurked and escape from servitude beacons. Tree hollows, sinkholes, caves, lookout points, thickets and use of inaccessible land such as southern swamps formed natural barriers that protected freedom seekers from their would-be captors. Knowledge of the heavens - the North Star - also made a difference between success and failure.

The author has traced, visited, excavated and detailed the spread of these church-based paths to freedom and her presentation of this little-taught American history makes for fascinating reading.

Dr. LaRoche spoke recently to The Forum during the Christian Education hour at PPC. Her book has been added to our library.

WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS...



We continue to keep in our prayers... the Members of the Armed Forces; Mary Reichley; Preston Abee, brother-in-law of Julie McMahan; Alison Galbreath; Dave Gorman, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; Betsy Sanders and Naomi Gerwin, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; Terry Fortune, son-in-law of Martha Brame; Patty Dunnavant; Ed Ebert; Genie Rudmann, cousin of Dan Dowd; Del Smith; Greg Bonnette, father of Natalie Rudnic; Cam Sanders, nephew of Marcia Boogaard; the family of Lily McKee, friend of Liz Kent; Pam Drumheller; Jackie Fowler; Maggie McKenna

FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship Committee is planning a Spring Ladies Luncheon on Saturday, May 16. If anyone one would be able to host the luncheon in their home, please contact Louise Plumb at lpumb@aol.com or 301-762-2769 for information. Thank you!

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

Spring Project Honoring Carolyn Stump

To honor our dear friend who worked tirelessly to help those in need at Stepping Stones Shelter in Rockville, we will be installing a garden bench on Saturday May 2. A few volunteers are also needed on Saturday April 18 to prepare the bench location. Look for more details in coming weeks including sign-up information.



2015 Mission Trip - Sunday, June 21-Saturday, June 27, 2015, Athens, Ohio

Adults, college students, and youth going into grade 9 or above in the fall of 2015 are participating in a summer mission trip to Athens, Ohio, where we will serve with Good Works, Inc. (<http://good-works.net/>). The vision of Good Works is to create a "community of hope" with and for people who are struggling with poverty and homelessness in rural Appalachia. As a Christian community, they are seeking to grow in love for God and neighbor.



Good Works engages in a number of projects in the community. They run a homeless shelter, a resource center for people struggling with poverty, long term transitional housing for single adults moving toward independence and self-sufficiency, community meals for the homeless and rural poor, a home repair program for seniors and people with disabilities, summer programing and lunches for children in poverty, and more. Our mission team will have the opportunity to assist with many of these diverse programs.

Sophia House

Sophia House, in Rockville, is a congregation and community supported shelter that provides rehabilitative services for homeless women in our community. PPC volunteers deliver meals for 30 homeless women on the first Sunday of every month to be served at 6:30pm. Please sign up on the kiosk in Fellowship Hall for a month in 2015. Please contact Marnel Williams (wmarnel@aol.com) with questions.

Provide grocery gift cards to members of the community in need

PPC distributes up to 15 grocery gift cards to those in need on the second Tuesday of the month. Remember us when you go to the grocery store. The gifts are always appreciated by those who receive them. Donations of \$20 Giant/Safeway gift cards may be placed in the offering plate during worship, or brought to the office.

From the Clerk of Session

Susan Haynes, Clerk of Session

The Session met for its regular March meeting. The focus of the meetings this year continues to be:

- implementation of the new Mission initiative,
- assessment and development of Christian Education strategies, and
- development of sound financial management plans.

Elder Kendall reported that the February financials are within budget and reviewed the new format. Bill Hartzog and Calvin Koonce, members of the Endowment Committee, gave presentations outlining an organizational chart for financial management activities and the development of an investment strategy for the endowment funds. The chart showed funding categories, funding sources and roles and responsibilities. The Session is responsible for determining the investment risk strategy to maximize returns while protecting the balance. Final decisions on both the organizational structure and investment strategy will be determined in April or May.

Elder Hudgings provided an update on the new Mission initiative with Interfaith Works. The Memorandum of Understanding is still under review and discussion. A volunteer training class was held in February with 14 members attending to learn communication strategies, boundary control and possible roles. The families have been selected and are currently working with the Interfaith Works team. A second program is with the Montgomery County HOC and involves developing a one day STEM opportunity for at risk middle school students. Planning continues on this exciting new program. Kitty Cowie was recognized for her exceptional leadership coordinating the PPC meals for Sophia House, for seven years. Thank you Kitty!

Elders Hougen and Pereles presented an update on Christian Education activities. A consultant is providing guidance on the review and data collection on how best to meet the needs of the congregation for children and youth Sunday School. The roles of two new positions, Christian Education staff for both adult and youth, continue to be developed. A community event, a speaker on the impact of social media on children, is scheduled for Saturday, May 2, 2015. Additional information will be distributed as the weekend plans are finalized.

Other business included the report showing current average attendance for worship service to be 140. Bad winter weather contributed to low attendance over three consecutive snowy Sundays. The Season of Lent included Wednesday evening services for meditative contemplation, scripture and music.

Additional information is available from your Elder representatives.

RECENT PPC EVENTS



Women's Retreat, March 21, 2015



Wednesdays in Lent



PPC Serving meals at Wilkens Avenue Women's Assessment Center



Men's Book Club – Meets the 3rd Tuesday of the Month at PPC at 10:30am in the library



We welcomed 9 new members to our PPC family:
Judy Andrew, Marye & Bill Cotton, Alex & Dick Kline,
Hannah & Denis von Kaeppler, Cheri & Scott Rogers

Other Events in the past month:

The men of PPC prepared a pancake breakfast before worship on March 22
PPC Nick Mason's Eagle Project result is a new outdoor classroom space for our children outside the lower classrooms

A special Intergenerational Christian Education was held in Fellowship Hall on Palm Sunday
A group of PPC members met for "dinner and the theater" (Hexagon)

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT POTOMAC PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH JULY 6-10, 2015, 9:30AM-12:30PM



Children between the ages of 3 (potty trained)–4th grade (in the fall of 2015) are invited to join us July 6-10, 2015, 9:30am-12:30pm, to celebrate God's love in action. At Cokesbury's G-Force VBS, kids explore how to put their faith into action. In this mission-focused VBS, kids experience God's unstoppable love and discover how to fuel up and move in and through life with God.

Adult and youth volunteers are needed before, during, and after VBS Week. Go to the website to sign up for available opportunities.

Please register online at www.potomacpresbyterian.org or contact Volunteer Coordinator Ann Hill (annchill@gmail.com) with questions.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE – SATURDAY, MAY 2

Social Media: the Good, the Bad, the Selfie

PPC is very excited to announce two special presentations that we are hosting entitled "**Social Media: the Good, the Bad, the Selfie**"– one for adults and one for PPC youth--on **Saturday, May 2** with guest speaker **Sarah Brooks!**



Sarah Brooks, of Texas, is a mom of two young boys by day and a marketer, writer, and social media advocate by night and at naptime. As a part of the Millennial generation, she is passionate about mentoring teens and bridging the gap between parents and kids on all things technology and social media. We encourage you to visit Sarah's blog called "Life as of Late" (www.lifeasoflate.com) to get to know her a little, and hope you will join us for this incredible opportunity!

9:00 am- 12 noon Adults from PPC and our local community are all welcome to attend! Please invite a friend, or two or three! This session will be held in PPC's Fellowship Hall and will appeal to parents of children and youth, grandparents, and literally *any* adult curious about social media!

6:00 pm

PPC Youth are invited to talk with Sarah over dinner at the Kuhn's house (7101 Saunders Court, Bethesda). Please invite a friend or two to come with you to meet Sarah! She is smart, funny, and incredibly engaging! You will not be bored! Parents, please encourage your youth to attend this session with Sarah. If your child uses any form of social media, you will want them to hear what Sarah has to say!

STEPHEN MINISTRY



We have recently updated our display of "Care Notes", small booklets that address topics such as grief, illness, and more. Please help yourself to these "Care Notes", located in the Narthex near the name tag board, if you find a topic of interest to you or a friend. Current titles are:

When Someone You Love has Cancer,
Prayers for Coping with Cancer,
What to say to Someone who has Cancer,
Finding the Courage to Face a Serious Illness,
The Spiritual Needs of a Seriously Ill Loved One,
A Booklet of Prayers When You're Facing Surgery,
When Illness or Accident Challenges your Faith in a Loving God,
Enriching Your Family's Faith in the Midst of a Busy World,
Do I Have to Give Up My Independence as I Age?,

What to Say to Someone Who is Grieving,
Grief Relapse: How to Cope with It,
Helping a Child Grieve and Grow,
When Grief Makes You Feel like You're "Going Crazy",
Who Am I Now that I am Divorced?,
Talking with Your Kids about Serious Illness in the Family,
Parenting a Troubled Teen,
For Teens: Stressed Out: Getting Your Life Back in Balance,
For Teens: Navigating Friendships.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Charlie Nahabedian (6th)
Jonathan Davies and Kyle Newton (7th)
Elsie Reid (9th)
Josh Stoltzfus (10th)
Tad Asbury (11th)
Nels Ackerson and Jane Hill (12th)
Susan Haynes (15th)
Carole Hudgings and William Galbreath (16th)
Denise Pierson (17th)
Michael Shively (20th)

Tom Hougen (21st)
John Clouse and Gregg Johnson (22nd)
Preston Kuhn, Sherry Johnson, and Jung Lawrence (24th)
Camille Kendall, Nelia Scioli, and Chasen Mindnich (27th)
Robert Mitchell (28th)
Kayla Mason (29th)



UPCOMING MUSIC AT PPC

After rehearsing and leading worship through a cold and snowy winter, and continuing to make music through a cool spring and Easter, the musicians in the PPC choirs are looking forward to warmer weather in the coming months!

- The Children's Choir will sing at least twice more prior to our summer break.
- The Bell Choir will continue through May, as will the Sanctuary choir, which sings nearly every Sunday until June.
- After enjoying the Special Music on March 22 in memory Darcy Smith, there will be special music in memory of Jennifer Russo on May 3.
- Trumpeter Chuck Seipp will be part of our music in late April.
- The West Point Alumni Glee Club will be with us in May as we celebrate Pentecost and Faith and Freedom Sunday, too.

Lots of music coming up before the summer – come and hear and enjoy the musical experience in the months ahead!

Tom Andrew
Director of Music and Organist





April 2015

April 2015							May 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4						1	2
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mar 29	30	31	Apr 1 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 3:45pm GS Troop 642 4:45pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Rm 4) 7:30pm Evening Lenten Service	2 Maundy Thursday 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Supper 7:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship with Communion by	3 Good Friday 7:30pm Good Friday Tenebrae	4
5 Easter 9:00am Communion Worship 10:00am Coffee and 10:15am Easter Egg Hunt 11:00am Communion Worship 6:00pm PPC Family Serving	6 Office Closed	7 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 6:00pm Compassionate Friends	8 6:30am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	9 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)	10	11
12 9:45am Christian Education 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Coffee and Refreshments 12:15pm Senior High Lunch	13 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 6:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm Committee Meetings	14 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall)	15 STP DEADLINE 6:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Wednesday Morning 11:00am Worship Committee 3:45pm GS Troop 642 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Room 4)	16 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 3:00pm Memorial Garden 4:00pm Girl Scout Troop (Fellowship Hall) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir)	17 6:00pm Middle School Youth Group	18 Reformed Institute Board Meeting
19 9:45am Christian Education 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Coffee and Refreshments 12:15pm Session Meeting	20 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 3:30pm GS Troop 3788 (Jennifer LaRoche)	21 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 10:30am Men's Book Club (Parlor)	22 6:30am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Room 4)	23 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	24 Confirmation Retreat	25 Confirmation Retreat
26 Confirmation Retreat 9:45am Christian Education 11:00am Worship - Stephen Ministry Sunday 12:00pm Coffee and 12:15pm Senior High Lunch	27 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	28 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall)	29 6:30am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study 3:45pm GS Troop 642 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Room 4)	30 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	May 1	2

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Potomac Presbyterian Church

Rev. Sean Miller, Pastor

Rev. Kendra Grams, Associate Pastor for Family Ministries

Tom Andrew, Director of Music and Organist

301-299-6007, www.potomacpresbyterian.org

*We are an active Christian community devoted to
worship that stirs the soul,
education that engages the mind,
and service that sends us into the world*

The Steeple to People

Potomac Presbyterian Church

A spiritual destination within a growing congregation.

May 2015



FROM THE PASTOR

"I've Been There"

Sarah, Hannah, and I went on a quick vacation to Puerto Rico last week. We enjoyed a few days of sunshine and beach while Hannah got to dip her little feet into the ocean for the first time. She preferred the pool.

On our way back, Hannah was pretty fussy on the plane. She wasn't at meltdown stage, but she was well on her way there. The woman sitting in the row ahead of us had already turned around and given us a "look." You know the look. Hannah was past her bedtime, we were facing a four hour flight home, and though Sarah had walked up and down the aisle with her for several minutes, nothing was working.

But over the course of those minutes of fussy Hannah (which felt like hours), the man sitting next to us in the aisle seat began to help in his own, quiet way. First he let us get up and out of our seats several times, gladly, reassuring us that we could get up as many times as we needed. Then he would smile and make faces at Hannah as she squirmed. Finally, after many minutes of walking her up and down the aisle, Hannah was exhausted, Sarah was more exhausted, and Hannah's eyes were finally beginning to close. When Sarah climbed over the man in the aisle seat to get back to her window seat, the man in the aisle seat took off his nice leather jacket, rolled it up, and tucked it under Sarah's left arm, so that she could rest her arm comfortably while she rocked Hannah to sleep. It was an extremely kind gesture.

Have you ever heard the expression, "I've been there?"

Has anyone ever looked at you and let you know, "I've been there?"

Throughout Hannah's first year, we have heard this from strangers, and more often than not, we have seen it in the glances and smiles and expressions on people's faces. Whether it is taking Hannah out to breakfast while she makes a mess everywhere at the table, or sitting with Miss Squirmy in the pew during worship, many people have looked at us with a very compassionate, "I've been there." And that's meant a lot.

Jesus never defines compassion. He tells stories about compassion. He tells a story about a father with a wayward, prodigal child and one about a stranded and wounded traveler who was all but dead on the side of the road. And in both stories, Jesus says, "they were filled with compassion." And that

compassion compelled them to act—the father opened his arms and his home—the Good Samaritan helped get the traveler the help he needed.

As Sarah and I celebrate Hannah's first birthday in the coming days, I also celebrate those people who told us by word or smile, "I've been there." And in celebrating them, I wonder how I might respond in kind the next time I see a person struggling, or hurting, or needing some help. I wonder how many times I have looked away instead of looking with compassion and allowing that compassion to lead me to act on someone's behalf. I wonder how many times I have let the screaming baby bother me than having compassion for the parent, or how many times I have made assumptions about the man asking me for money on the street, rather than remembering times when I've been desperate for help, or attention, or a kind word.

Because in Jesus Christ, God doesn't remain a neutral third party to the hurt, and the sin, and the pain of the world. God isn't separate from those whom God loves, nor is God removed from the world that has gone astray.

No, in Jesus Christ, God doesn't turn and look the other way.

God says, "I've been there."

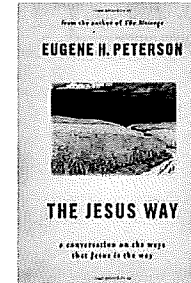
April Confirmation Retreat

The confirmation class spent the last weekend of April on retreat at The Claggett Center near Frederick. The confirmands spent the weekend reviewing topics of faith and writing their personal statements of faith. In addition, the group enjoyed delicious meals, numerous games, worship, and time to reflect on the moments, people, and places who have shaped their faith journeys.



LIBRARY NEWS

The Jesus Way, Eugene Peterson



The way of Jesus did not originate with Jesus although he provided its definitive articulation. Jesus was preceded - and anticipated - by many who revealed and prepared "the way of the Lord". As examples, the author presents the stories of six figures of Old Testament history - Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, Isaiah of Jerusalem and Isaiah of the Exile. Sacrifice, failure, a way on the margins, a way of holiness - but all would ultimately lead to Jesus - and his way.

In the second part of this book, Peterson makes clear that Jesus - in his time - adopted neither the grandiosity of Herod nor the intensity of the Pharisees. He likewise rejected the way of Caiaphus, the high priest, the way of the ascetic Essenes, the way of Josephus and the way of the Zealots who were everywhere in Galilee.

Jesus did not give explicit lectures on how to live in the "kingdom of God". His message was simply "Follow Me" - Jesus' characteristic way of speaking was in story form, using metaphor - parables, we call them.

Peterson is critical of the contemporary American church with its consumerism and charisma, having sometimes strayed, he feels, from the path of Jesus. His conversation in spiritual theology posits that the way Jesus leads and the way we follow are symbiotic. The author points us to Jesus but clearly advocates that the means of following "the Jesus way" are of equal importance.

Summer Worship Schedule Begins June 7

No Sunday Christian Education

10:00 a.m. Worship

11:00 a.m. Coffee and Refreshments

ADULT EDUCATION

Adults - Forum Discussions, Sundays at 9:45am in the Library

May 10-DC Young Adult Volunteers (YAV)

May 17 (*final class of the program year*)-Bob Stow, *Overview of the Reformed Institute's Spring Lectures*

Men's Book Club, Third Tuesday of the Month, 10:30am in the Parlor

May 19, 2015- *The Royal Stuarts: A History of the Family That Shaped Britain*, by Allan Massie

Presbyterian Association on Science, Technology, and the Christian Faith

The next PASTCF meeting will be on Saturday, May 16, at PPC at 9:00am. For the May 16 meeting, we plan to finish reading and discussing our book *The Meaning of Human Existence* by E. O. Wilson. The final spring 2015 meeting will be on June 13. Questions? Contact John Norvell (norvellj@msn.com), David Stump (dcstump@ymail.com), or Harry Tovmassian (hmtov@verizon.net).

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

2015 Mission Trip - Sunday, June 21-Saturday, June 27, 2015, Athens, Ohio



Adults, college students, and youth going into grade 9 or above in the fall of 2015 are participating in a summer mission trip to Athens, Ohio, where we will serve with Good Works, Inc. (<http://good-works.net/>). The vision of Good Works is to create a "community of hope" with and for people who are struggling with poverty and homelessness in rural Appalachia. As a Christian community, they are seeking to grow in love for God and neighbor.

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Rainbow Place Homeless Women's Shelter Tea and Fashion Show

Rainbow Place Shelter will hold its Tea and Fashion Show this year on May 31 2015 here at PPC in Fellowship Hall. The program will begin at 4:30 pm and conclude at 6:30 pm. All proceeds will benefit the Shelter and all PPC members are invited. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchase online at www.rainbowplace.org or by completing an invitation reply card available at the Church and returning to Rainbow Place Shelter.

FROM THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

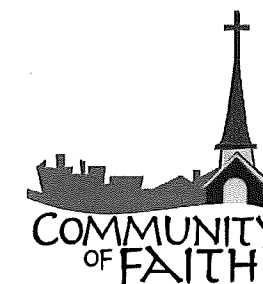
In May, we will have not one, but two opportunities to celebrate our growing family of faith and welcome new members into the congregation. On May 17, we will welcome another class of adult new members; and on May 31, it will be our honor and joy as a congregation to welcome twelve young people into the membership of the church as we celebrate Confirmation Sunday. With so many people joining the congregation this month, it is a good time for all of us to reflect on what it means to "join" a church. And so, I want to share a few reflections that I share with each confirmation class:

Walter Brueggemann, distinguished Hebrew Bible scholar and theologian once wrote, "Joining means belonging to and belonging with and belonging for."

Joining the church means belonging to... To what? It means belonging to a story that shapes us, a story of which we feel a part: the Christian story. For, the Christian story is really many stories, some old and some new, all about our diverse relationships with God. And as these individual stories are shared, they become the Christian story. In telling our individual stories and listening to others tell their stories (either through scripture or through present-day testimony), we are bound to one another. We become a church family with common roots.

And thus, joining the church also means belonging with... In joining the church, we do not bind ourselves to a building. We bind ourselves to a family of faith. We bind ourselves to a group of people who promise to care deeply about another, to take care of one another, to accept one another, to love one another no matter what. We belong with others; we belong with God's children. In joining the church, we choose to say that we have a responsibility to one another.

Still, more importantly, in joining the church, we also choose to say that we have a responsibility to God and God's purposes. Why? Because joining the church ultimately means belonging for a greater purpose, for God. It means choosing to be for a better world, choosing to be for God's purposes in the world. Confessing faith and joining a church is about responding to all the stories (that are part of the Christian story) which tell of God's hope for peace, justice, joy, wholeness, and love in the world. Confessing faith and joining a church is the act of getting into it, getting into God's work as a response to the amazing love and care that God extends to us. It is choosing to say "Yes" to God and God's work. It is about choosing a bothered, disturbed life where we don't settle for the way things are, but always work for the way God wants things to be. It is choosing a life open to new possibilities, a life of action for God!



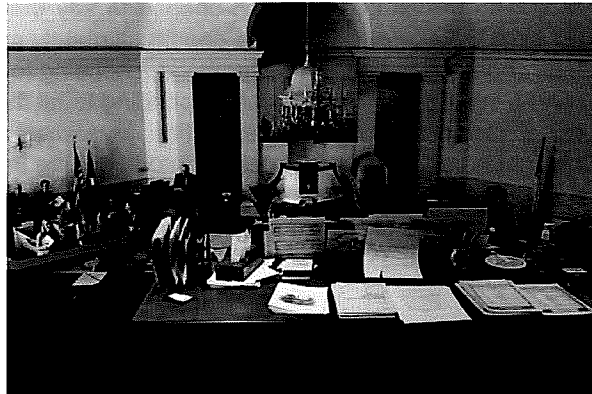
HOW TO STAY CONNECTED AT PPC

- Weekly bulletins and announcements
- Weekly email *Thursday Spirit* – Brief email highlighting upcoming events and activities
- Weekly email Monday morning *First Light* – Email summarizing Sunday's worship message
- *Steeple to People* Newsletter – detailed monthly/bimonthly newsletters mailed to your home and available on the website
- PPC Website – www.potomacpresbyterian.org – up-to-date church calendar and announcements
- Facebook – Potomac Presbyterian Church

UPCOMING MUSIC AT PPC

With the summer schedule rapidly approaching, the choirs of PPC are having their last few rehearsals before the end of May. The Sanctuary Choir, Bell Choir, and the Children's Choir have all done wonderful things this entire year, and are deserving of thanks and praise for all their efforts to enhance Worship. Thanks to you all!

Speaking of the Summer Schedule... we are looking to have some sort of Special Music at the Summer Services. This is an opportunity for all of us at PPC to share our talents during worship. So consider this your official invitation: "Would you please share your musical gifts during one of the Worship Services this summer?" If so... please talk to Tom Andrew, Director of Music, and sign up for one of the services on the "Sign-up Sheet" in the Fellowship Hall, or on *Sign-Up Genius* <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094EA9AF2CA75-summer>.



Singers, instrumentalists, ringers, solos, small groups - we hope everyone will consider offering their musical talents during Worship this summer. It's not too early to start planning now!

Tom Andrew
Director of Music and Organist

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PPC FAMILY!*

MAY BIRTHDAYS INCLUDE:

May 2 - Kathryn Haynes	May 23 - Jane Drumheller, Grace Pereles,
May 3 - Hannah Miller	Alexandra Mamalian, Martha Brame, Scott
May 8 - Sonia Russo	Mason, and Justine Sancho
May 9 - Bobby Trenkamp	May 24 - Rob Carlson
May 10 - Joe Curry and Kerry Stoltzfus	May 25 - Bill Sancho
May 11 - Grace Sheppard	May 26 - Ryan Kunst
May 19 - Courtney Spencer, Sam Spencer, and	May 28 - Stephanie Dorman
Luke Pereles	May 30 - Moses and Miriam MacFarlan
May 20 - Brian Dunlop	May 32 - Tom Kuhn, Meredith Asbury, and Cyndy
May 21 - Matthew Mamalian	Mamalian

**"Happy Birthday, PPC" is part of the ministry of the Congregational Care Committee. If you want to share your birthday, please sign up on one of the calendars in Fellowship Hall.*

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT POTOMAC PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH JULY 6-10, 2015, 9:30AM-12:30PM



Registration: Children between the ages of 3 (potty trained)–4th grade (in the fall of 2015) are invited to the G-FORCE Vacation Bible School, July 6-10, 9:30am-12:30pm, where kids explore how to put their faith into action. Register online at www.potomacpresbyterian.org. Space is limited, so participants are encouraged to register as soon as possible. Registration will be closed early if capacity is reached.

Volunteer: Adult and youth volunteers are needed:

- the week of June 1 to assemble pre-VBS mailings
- the weeks of June 15 and June 22 for craft prep, supply sorting, decorations prep, etc.
- Sunday, July 5, 11am-2pm to decorate church
- during VBS week (July 6-10, 9:30am-12:30pm) to assist with teaching, programming, supervision of children, and/or in the office
- on Friday, July 10, 12:30-2:30pm to prep for celebration lunch
- on Sunday, July 12, 10:30am-12:30pm to set out and serve celebration lunch
- the week of July 13 to assemble the follow-up mailing

Please register online at www.potomacpresbyterian.org or contact VBS Volunteer Coordinator Heather Davies (heatherdavies7@hotmail.com) with questions.

RECENT PPC EVENTS



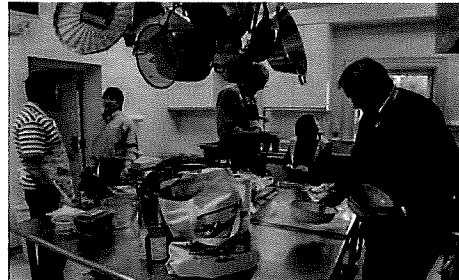
Palm Sunday



Dine with Nine



March Men's Pancake Breakfast



March Men's Pancake Breakfast



Easter Egg Hunt



Easter Fellowship



Nick Mason Eagle Project - Outdoor Classroom



The Middle Schoolers making goodie bags for the Children's Inn at NIH's Thoughtful Treasures program

DEACON CORNER

There is a reassuring rhythm to the church year that flows with the seasons as we anticipate the celebration of holidays and annual events at PPC.

This rhythm is what makes the Fellowship Committee tick as it provides hospitality for the congregation, community, visitors, and friends. Seasonal joys are anticipated and shared throughout the year such as the recent Maundy Thursday Supper, the Hexagon Theater outing, and the Men's Pancake Breakfast.

These opportunities for fellowship offer our family of faith times to gather together for social and spiritual activities, not only on Sunday mornings at coffee hour, but at meals and activities throughout the year. The fellowship that is shared around a table or enjoyed at an event strengthens the bonds of our church family as we support one another on our faith journeys.)

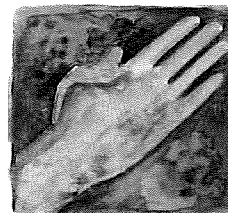
And, as we extend the hand of fellowship to the community and to our visitors, we share God's love by reaching out to welcome others. "In welcoming the stranger, you may entertain angels unawares." Hebrews 13:2.

The Fellowship Committee invites you to take part in the many opportunities throughout the year to share time with our church family and guests. Also, as chair of the Fellowship Committee, I invite you to join our committee. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 in the library. Our members have lots of fun as we work together and we welcome your helping hands and loving hearts to serve with us.

The annual Spring Ladies Luncheon and Program will be held at Potomac Presbyterian Church on May 16th. The program, "The Women of Antiquity", presented by Frances Bernstein, Ph.D. in Ancient History, will be held in the Library at 11:00 am. The luncheon will follow at 12:00. Please sign up in the Narthex to provide your favorite salad, bread or dessert.

Louise Plumb, Deacon, and Chair of the Fellowship Committee

WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS...



We continue to keep in our prayers... the Members of the Armed Forces; *Mary Reichley*; *Preston Abee*, brother-in-law of Julie McMahon; *Alison Galbreath*; *Dave Gorman*, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; *Betsy Sanders* and *Naomi Gerwin*, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; *Terry Fortune*, son-in-law of Martha Brame; *Patty Dunnavant*; *Ed Ebert*; *Genie Rudmann*, cousin of Dan Dowd; *Del Smith*; *Greg Bonnette*, father of Natalie Rudnic; *Cam Sanders*, nephew of Marcia Boogaard; the family of *Lily McKee*, friend of Liz Kent; *Pam Drumheller*; *Jackie Fowler*; *Maggie McKenna*

May 2015

May 2015							June 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	1	2	7	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30				
31													

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Apr 26	27	28	29	30	May 1	2 9:00am Social Media: The Good, the Bad, the Selfie 6:00pm Youth Dinner with Sarah Brooks (Kuhn Home)
3 9:45am Christian Education 11:00am Communion Worship - 12:00pm Coffee and 12:15pm Board of Deacons	4 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 3:30pm GS Troop 3788 (Jennifer LaRoche)	5 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 6:00pm Compassionate Friends	6 6:30am Men's Bible Study (Parlor) 9:30am Wednesday Morning 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower	7 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir	8	9
10 Mother's Day 9:45am Christian Education 11:00am Worship - Senior 12:00pm Coffee and	11 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 6:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm Committee Meetings	12 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall)	13 6:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Wednesday Morning 3:45pm GS Troop 642 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower	14 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir	15	16 9:00am Presbyterian Association of Science, Technology, and 11:00am Ladies Luncheon (Library at 11am, Fellowship
17 9:00am New Member Breakfast 9:45am Christian Education 9:45am New Member Class 11:00am Worship - New	18 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 3:30pm GS Troop 3788 (Jennifer LaRoche)	19 9:30am Art Class (Fellowship Hall) 10:30am Men's Book Club (Parlor) 10:30am PEO (Tietjen) (Library)	20 6:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Wednesday Morning 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower 6:30pm Montgomery Bird Club	21 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 4:00pm Girl Scout Troop 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir	22	23
24 9:45am Christian Education 11:00am Worship - Pentecost 12:00pm Coffee and 4:30pm Pastor Sean and Tom at	25 Memorial Day - Office Closed	26 6:00pm Presbytery Meeting	27 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 3:45pm Troop 642 4:30pm Children's Choir (Lower Level, Room 4)	28 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir	29	30
31 9:00am Confirmation Breakfast 11:00am Worship - Confirmation 12:00pm Coffee and 2:30pm Rainbow House	Jun 1	2	3	4	5	6

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Rev. Kendra Grams, Associate Pastor for Family Ministries
Tom Andrew, Director of Music and Organist

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*We are an active Christian community devoted to
worship that stirs the soul,
education that engages the mind,
and service that sends us into the world*

The Steeple to People

Potomac Presbyterian Church

A spiritual destination within a growing congregation.

Summer 2015



IN THIS ISSUE

May Highlights

- Susan B. Komen Race for the Cure, May 9
- Dedication of Bench at Stepping Stones Shelter, May 13
- West Point Alumni Glee Club, May 24
- Confirmation Sunday, May 31

June Highlights

- Father's Day Chorus, June 21
- Athens, Ohio Mission Trip, June 21-June 27

July Highlights

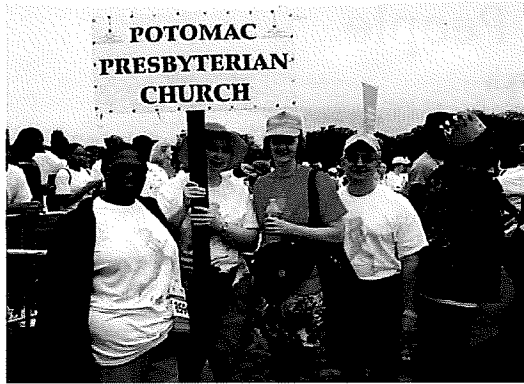
- Autism Speaks 5k, July 4
- Vacation Bible School, July 6-10

HOW TO STAY CONNECTED AT PPC

- Weekly bulletins and announcements
- Weekly email *Thursday Spirit* – Brief email highlighting upcoming events and activities
- Weekly email Monday morning *First Light* – Email summarizing Sunday's worship message
- *Steeple to People* Newsletter – detailed monthly/bimonthly newsletters mailed to your home and available on the website
- PPC Website – www.potomacpresbyterian.org – up-to-date church calendar and announcements
- Facebook – Potomac Presbyterian Church

Beginning this fall, we will no longer be mailing the *Steeple to People* to everyone. The *Steeple to People* will be available on the website, and a notice will be emailed when a new one is available.

If you would like to continue to receive the STP by mail, please contact the office at 301-299-6007 or admin@potomacpresbyterian.org and it will be mailed to you.



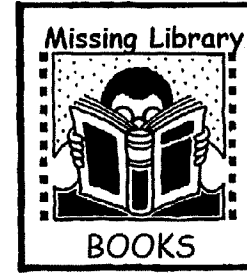
Susan B. Komen Race for the Cure, May 9
Marnel Williams, (team Captain) Olivia Mabeus, Susan and Robert Mitchell



Dedication of Bench in Memory of Carolyn Stump, at Stepping Stones Shelter, May 13



PPC Father's Day Chorus, June 2015



Please check your house for PPC Library Books. We have several books that have been checked out and not returned. Thanks!



Check the website for photos of this ongoing summer project.



Team PPC at Autism Speaks 5k, July 4



West Point Alumni Glee Club, May 31

Gratitude Expressed for PPC's Mission Support



One of the most rewarding activities of the PPC Mission Committee is reading thank you letters from the local, national, and international organizations that we support. Such letters not only express appreciation for our support but also convey personal examples about how our contributions have made a difference in the lives of individual people. Below are three expressions of gratitude received in late 2014 that describe how PPC's mission ministry sends us into the valleys of the world:

"Thank you for your Church's support of Rainbow Place... Your contribution not only allows us to provide a warm, safe and caring environment for the many homeless women who will seek shelter this winter, but to provide the support and resources needed to enable them to transition to a better quality of life.... We had a fantastic example of this recently. A young woman rang the doorbell and volunteered to do "anything that we needed done". She shared that she had once been a client here and that through our support, she has transitioned to a more stable and fulfilling life and she wants to "give back"." **Nancy Sushinsky, Director, Rainbow Place**

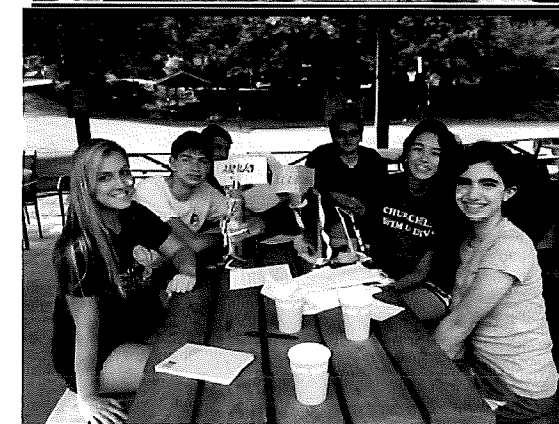
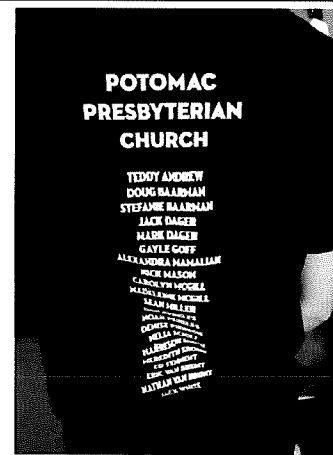
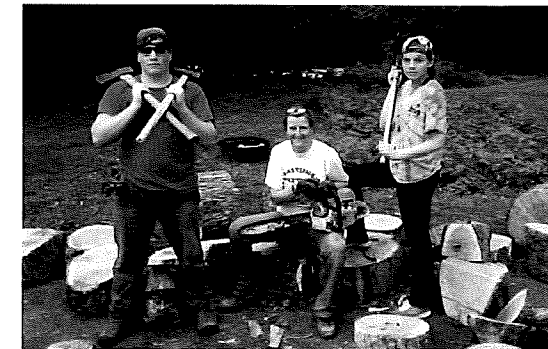
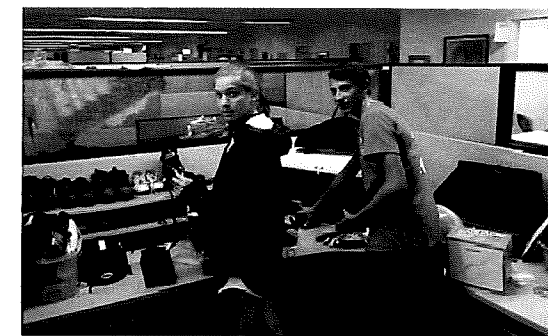
"I want to personally thank you for your generous donation to Stepping Stones Shelter... The individualized support we provide for these families...is making a world of difference in our community. Marcello and his wife Terese, parents of 3, wished us a tearful goodbye as they loaded up a moving truck to head to their new apartment. He said: "I came here with only the clothes on my back. And now, I have a home." Your contribution makes that hope possible for families who are struggling with homelessness." **Denise Fredericks, Executive Director, Stepping Stones Shelter**

"On behalf of Wesley Theological Seminary, thank you for your generous and faithful support of the scholarship program. Your gift in particular – earmarked for Presbyterian students – also provides for an important level of diversity within our student body, One of the students benefiting from your gifts is Min Kim, a life-long Presbyterian and an international student from Korea." **Justice H. Randolph, Program Manager for development, Wesley Theological Seminary**

Min Kim, a second-year M.Div. student, writes: *"As a recipient of a Dean's Scholarship, I am writing to thank you for your donation. I came to Wesley to deepen my theological knowledge but also gain broad experiences in the United States and other denominations.... During my first three semesters, I have been able to newly recognize my theological identify and widen theological understanding. Moreover, I have realized the importance of a relation between society and Church ministry.... I believe that we all are members of the body of Christ. I am truly thankful for receiving your generous support. I pray God's incomparable and immeasurable grace is richly overflowing in your community."*

MISSION TRIP TO ATHENS, OHIO JUNE 21 JUNE-27

In June, twenty-one members of PPC traveled to Athens, Ohio. They worked long hours assisting Good Works, Inc. The vision of Good Works is to create a "community of hope" with and for people who are struggling with poverty and homelessness in rural Appalachia. Read about their experiences on their Blog, available at www.potomacpresbyterian.org





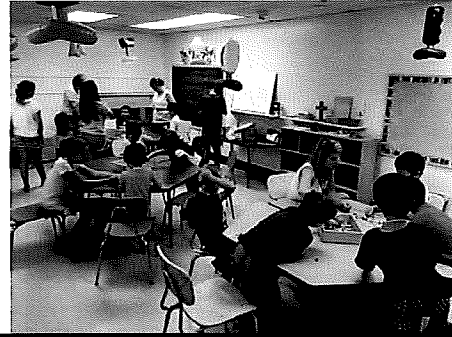
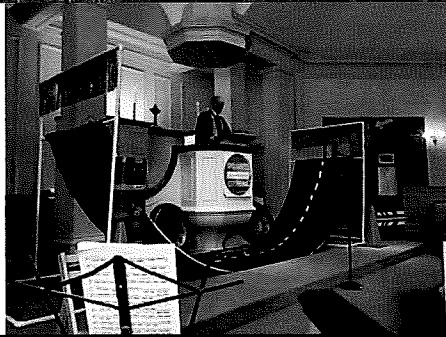
Around fifty children (ages 3-9) participated in this year's Vacation Bible School at PPC. Many volunteers from PPC and the community helped to make the week enjoyable and enriching for all the children.

We extend a special word of thanks to these volunteers:

Ed Pierson, Ted Carroll, Jeanie Bissey, Melissa Grigorian, Wendy Kuhn, Jeanne Grillo, Denise Pierson, Kara Trenkamp, Karen Karch, Anne Carey, Cyndy Mamalian, Olivia Mabeus, Sean Miller, Karen Wise, Lindsay Chapin, Tom Andrew, Jung Lawrence, Pat McMillen, Heather Davies, Louise Plumb, Miriam Conley, Jean Granum, Luis Gomez, Eva Conley, Matthew Mamalian, Abigale Olmsted, Riley McGuire, Chandler Kuhn, Maeve McGuire, Caleb Kim, Roman Conway, Colin Davies, Gracie Yoon.

We also extend our thanks to the members of the Vacation Bible School planning team:

Anne Carey, Heather Davies, Patricia Eng, Jennifer Gawronski, Melissa Grigorian, Stephanie Hampton, Ann Hill, and Cyndy Mamalian



"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PPC FAMILY!*

SUMMER BIRTHDAYS INCLUDE:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1 June- James Singerling, Dan Drumheller | 4 July- Alexander Henderson | 3 August-Emily Petti |
| 2 June-Bill King | 5 July- Partridge Carey | 4 August-Thomas Cookerly |
| 3 June- Penny Boyd | 6 July- Elizabeth Rust | 5 August-Kay Norvell, Sharon Bond |
| 4 June- Mary Hill | 7 July- Calvin Reid, Derek Williamson | 6 August-Tracy Talbot |
| 6 June- Ellen Doctor | 8 July- Megan Bedingfield, Morgan Bedingfield | 8 August-Emily Mesimer |
| 7 June- Sebastian McFeaters | 10 July- Roberta Hartzog | 9 August-Cliff Kendall |
| 8 June- Jack White | 11 July- Steven Dorman | 10 August-Megan Boyd, Michelle Boyd, Brandon Parr, Gwynne Jenkins-McMillan |
| 8 June- Nicholas Mason | 13 July- Robert Haynes, Charlotte Koonce | 12 August-Lia Sohl |
| 8 June- Stewart Kerr | 15 July- Jeanne Grillo | 14 August-Catherine Hotes, William Thompson, Jack Knowles, Sean Miller |
| 10 June-Jean Fisler | 16 July- Lewis Alfaro, Douglas Baarman | 15 August-Gavin May, Dan Pierson |
| 11 June-Audrey Phillips | 18 July- Kathy Jeffers | 17 August-Marye Cotton |
| 12 June-Mary Simonds | 19 July- Elizabeth Dempsey, Meghan Pierson | 18 August-Elizabeth Friedman |
| 14 June-Mike Dager, Lindsey Bedingfield | 21 July- Janet Cookerly, Carly Rogers | 19 August-Ted Carroll, Kimberly Dean, Marnel Williams |
| 15 June-William Hotes, Scott Rogers, Meggie Newton, Christian Alarie, Blake Conway | 23 July- Marilyn Shankland, John Hummon | 21 August-Vicki Dorman, Cheri Rogers, Marjorie Dean, Emily Cyrcway, Haddon Mindnich |
| 16 June-Owen Goodier, Jean Hummon | 25 July- Lewis Chapin, Haley Philips | 22 August-Catherine Cowie |
| 17 June-Sarah Miller, Danielle Baarman | 27 July- Norman Augustine, Stefanie Baarman | 24 August-Juliette Mamalian, Beth Dart |
| 18 June- Mackenzie Phillips | 28 July- Charles Leber, Justin Lau, Carl Atwood | 27 August-Kenneth Bedingfield, Lindsay Chapin |
| 20 June- Pam Drumheller | 29 July- Will Johnson, Joseph Haynes | 29 August-Robert Mecklenburg |
| 21 June-Meredith Bond | | 30 August-Melanie Mason |
| 22 June-Allison Srour, Ava Henderson | | 31 August-Ann Hill |
| 24 June- Ruth Lincoln, Geoff Johnson, Robert Shively, Blake Caswell | | |
| 26 June- David Dempsey | | |
| 27 June- Mary Margaret Smith | | |
| 30 June- Paul Mamalian | | |

**"Happy Birthday, PPC" is part of the ministry of the Congregational Care Committee. If you want to share your birthday, please email the office (admin@potomacpresbyterian.org) to update our database.*

Save the Dates

Blessing AND Stocking Backpacks

On Sunday, August 23 during worship, we'll have a special time to pray for all students as they prepare to begin a new school year. All are invited. Students of all ages are encouraged to bring their backpacks or school bags to worship on August 23 to be blessed and to receive a special gift.

That Sunday we will also be collecting donations of school supplies for the Interfaith Clothing Center School Supplies Program (a ministry of Interfaith Works). They provide school supplies for children in Montgomery County who would otherwise go without the basic supplies necessary for learning. In particular, they are seeking the following items: *backpacks (grades K-12), packages of lined filler paper, tab dividers, 2-pocket folders, and pencil pouches.*

Rally Day

September 13, 2015

9:45am Christian Education for all ages

11:00am Worship

Choir Rehearsals

Begin the week of September 7, 2015

6:45pm Bell Choir, Thursdays

8:00pm Sanctuary Choir, Thursdays

NEW MEMBER CLASS OCTOBER 17

On Saturday, October 17, from 9:00am-2:00pm, we will offer a one day class for those interested in joining the PPC family of faith. Lunch will be included. These new members will then join the church during worship on October 18. Please email Jeanne Grillo at admin@potomacpresbyterian.org or call the PPC office at 301-299-6007 if you are interested in participating or would like more information.

Presbyterian Association on Science, Technology, and the Christian Faith (PASTCF)

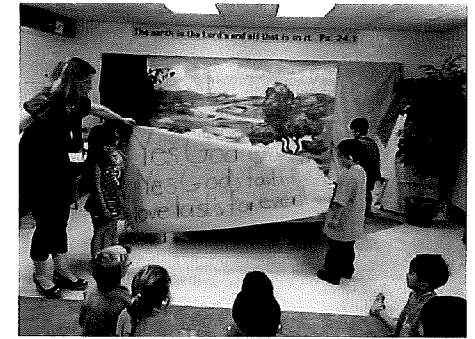
September 12, 2015 the PASTCF for 2015 will kick off with a presentation from Dr. John Haught, Professor of Theology at Georgetown University.

Dr. Haught has studied the theological issues related to evolution and has lectured on this topic many times. We are fortunate to have Dr. Haught attend our meeting and give his presentation. We hope you will attend this first meeting. As usual, we will meet at the Potomac Presbyterian Church at 9:00am.

At the subsequent PASTCF meeting on October 17, we will discuss the first four chapters *The Language of Science and Faith: Straight Answers to Genuine Questions* by Karl W. Giberson and Francis S. Collins

Dates for all the fall meetings are 9:00am at PPC on September 12, October 17, November 21, and December 12.

Questions? Contact John Norvell (norvellj@msn.com), Harry Tovmassian (hmtov@verizon.net), or Dave Stump (dcstump@ymail.com).



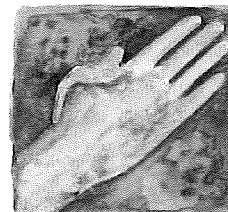
More Photos from Vacation Bible School

Confirmation Sunday, May 31, 2015

On Sunday, May 31, 12 confirmands were welcomed into the Potomac Presbyterian Church: *Teddy Andrew, Eliza Asbury, Emily Cyrway, Charlotte Galbreath, William Galbreath, Charlotte Koonce, Alexandra Mamalian, Maddie McGill, Carly Rogers, Harrison Smith, Sam Spencer, and Meredith White.*



WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS...



We continue to keep in our prayers... the Members of the Armed Forces; Mary Reichley; Preston Abee, brother-in-law of Julie McMahon; Dave Gorman, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; Betsy Sanders and Naomi Gerwin, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; Terry Fortune, son-in-law of Martha Brame; Patty Dunnivant; Ed Ebert; Genie Rudmann, cousin of Dan Dowd; Del Smith; Cam Sanders, nephew of Marcia Boogaard; the family of Lily McKee, friend of Liz Kent; Pam Drumheller; Rich McMahon; DeAndra Jones; Chris McKee; Tom Cookerly

August 2015

August 2015							September 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
30	31												

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jul 26	27	28	29	30	31	Aug 1
2 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee and Refreshments 6:00pm PPC Family Serving	3 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	4 6:00pm Compassionate Friends	5	6 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)	7	8
9 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee and Refreshments	10 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 6:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm Committee Meetings	11 3:00pm Communications	12	13 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)	14	15
16 9:00am Turkey Trip Meeting 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee and 4:30pm Pastor Sean and Tom at	17 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	18	19	20 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)	21	22
23 10:00am Worship - Blessing of the Backpacks 11:00am Coffee and 11:15am Session Meeting	24 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	25	26	27 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)	28	29
30 10:00am Worship - baptism 11:00am Coffee and Refreshments	31 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	Sep 1	2	3	4	5

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worship that stirs the soul,
education that engages the mind,
and service that sends us into the world*

The Steeple to People

September 2015

FROM THE PASTOR

So much has happened this summer in the life of our congregation!

Here are a few snapshots of mission and ministry that I shared with the Session during our August meeting:

- I was grateful to take part in the mission trip this past June to Athens, Ohio, where I treasured the opportunity to work, play, study, and share, with our youth and adults. We had a great time and were moved by the work being done by a small but mighty organization serving the poor of Athens—Good Works Inc.
- I have been overjoyed to see our Sanctuary relatively full during these past several weeks in July and August, particularly with our parking lot expansion and grounds enhancement project in full swing. In fact, when compared with worship attendance from last year, we have had more people in worship during construction this summer than last. You all are amazing!
- I am inspired by the great ministry happening in Project Shine, our new local mission initiative to combat two-generation poverty in our county. This fall, you'll hear more this fall about what God has been doing in the lives of those whom we are serving and our members who are already involved. Lives are being changed and great ministry is taking place.
- I am truly humbled by your continued generosity as you continue to fulfill your pledge commitments to the Firm Foundation, Shining Future Campaign. With more than 50% of the three year campaign now behind us, we are well ahead of pace, having received over 80% of the 1.6 million that was initially pledged. We are building healthy financial reserves and providing seed money for Project Shine. Plans are being made for improvements to our facilities, including the Sanctuary and Narthex, which will be communicated and further developed in 2016. The Session is carefully, and faithfully, making prudent plans for these funds, and I am grateful to all who have so generously contributed to our capital fund.
- Finally, I am energized by the hard work of our Elders and Deacons who join our staff in setting the agenda in ministry and mission for our year ahead. From recruiting Sunday School teachers, planning Fellowship events, caring for those who have been recently hospitalized, developing our staff resources, securing our congregation's financial health, and planning for a full year of short term mission opportunities, our leadership has been hard at work in between trips to the beach and time away with family.

And that's only what's been happening this summer!

On Rally Day Sunday, September 13, I hope you will join me in the Library from 9:45-10:45 am for a conversation about the year ahead. I would like to share my vision for our 2015-2016 year, including



plans for additions to our Christian Education staff and new opportunities for small group study. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring your questions and comments as we prepare for a new year of worship, Christian education, mission, and fellowship together.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year ahead.
Gratefully, Sean Miller

FROM THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR



In recent years, Dr. Kara Powell, who is the executive director of the Fuller Youth Institute at Fuller Theological Seminary, has written a series of books on what she calls "sticky faith." Her writings about "sticky faith" are based on seven years of research with over 500 young people, 150 churches, and 50 families in which her team sought to uncover what contributes to youth actively claiming their faith in high school, college, and beyond.

Powell's team discovered that the variable most correlated with youth having mature faith in high school and college is *involvement in intergenerational worship and relationships*.

At PPC, one of our guiding principles is that "we strive to be an intergenerational community. We learn from and are led by God's children of all ages." This commitment directly aligns with Dr. Powell's "sticky faith" findings.

There are so many ways that we are already embracing intergenerational worship and relationships. I always love seeing children usher next to adults who have been ushering for longer than anyone can remember. It is a blessing to see entire families serving coffee and refreshments together following worship or serving dinner at Sophia House (the Interfaith Works women's shelter). And one of my greatest joys this summer was greeting the mission trip participants as they returned from their week of service in Athens, Ohio. The intergenerational relationships built on that trip were and are so strong that they all braved a steady rain to make sure they hugged everyone on the trip before heading home for a warm shower and soft bed.

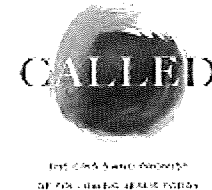
PPC clearly understands the importance of intergenerational worship and relationships. Yet, there is always more we can do. Powell champions the idea of making sure each young person has five caring adults (other than parents) in their lives to help nurture them in faith and life. We are not talking about five adults to whom parents "outsource" their children's spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual development. We are talking about five adults who know the young person by name, who pray for the young person, who can form a web of support for when the young person struggles or stumbles.

So, parents, I encourage you to create opportunities for your children to connect with caring, supportive adults. Not sure where to start? Powell offers a simple idea: periodically ask your children which adults they like or would like to get to know better. File the info away mentally. And when you have time for lunch after church or know your child has a particularly important concert, game, or other event, invite those adults along.

LIBRARY NEWS

The Crisis and Promise of Following Jesus Today, by Mark Labberton

MARK LABBERTON



"Follow Me" was the simple two-word call of Jesus to His would-be disciples and while the Kingdom of God turns on Jesus' commandments to love God and our neighbor, the truth is that the church - the community of Christian believers - has lost its mission in the world today and doesn't know it. In this book, the author reflects on the identity and calling that God has given the church. But examples abound of those within the church failing to live as the "light of the world and salt of the earth". The prevalent separation between words and actions, between voice and touch is rife both inside and outside the church. Hence the crisis we Christians face today, as many individuals find the church disconnected to the world and

turn elsewhere with their issues. The dire situation of the church might not matter so much if the world in which it is placed were not lost too but it is. Every believer and every community of believers needs to recover our identity as followers of Jesus and learn to practice it in daily life in the context of today's real world. People can and should be affirmed to live God's call as faithful disciples in their whole lives, including their daily labor.

The Biblical narrative tells how God's divine desire is subverted by the very human beings God created as partners to reflect God's image. It also tells the long story of how relentlessly God pursues us in faithfulness and love to live as God's people in the world, giving witness to the One who will make all things right.

WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS

We continue to keep in our prayers... *the Members of the Armed Forces; Mary Reichley; Preston Abee, brother-in-law of Julie McMahan; Dave Gorman, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; Betsy Sanders and Naomi Gerwin, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; Terry Fortune, son-in-law of Martha Brame; Patty Dunnivant; Ed Ebert; Genie Rudmann, cousin of Dan Dowd; Del Smith; Cam Sanders, nephew of Marcia Boogaard; the family of Lily McKee, friend of Liz Kent; Pam Drumheller; Rich McMahan; DeAndra Jones; Chris McKee; Tom Cookerly; Millie Rowan; Karen Phillips, friend of Harry Tovmassian; Denise Poole; Farid Srou; Mark McLaughlin, friend of Natalie Rudnic.*

"This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, PPC FAMILY!*

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

02 Sept - Tara Kubasik, Maria Stoltzfus	21 Sept - Chris Minter-Dowd	11 Oct - Britten Mindnich
03 Sept - Robb Hill	23 Sept - Juliana Gordon	13 Oct - George Lawrence
05 Sept - Jim Jeffers	25 Sept - Meredith Srour	15 Oct - Young Joon, Sharon Shively
08 Sept - Gloria Leber	27 Sept - Philip Shively	17 Oct - Conner Gawronski
09 Sept - Tali Smith	28 Sept - Melissa Caswell	18 Oct - Honor Mindnich
10 Sept - Carolyn Dorman, Karen Wise	30 Sept - Dylan Parr	20 Oct - Colin Asbury
11 Sept - Alan Beck, James Lawrence	01 Oct - Suzete Henderson	22 Oct - Edward Ebert, Madeleine McGill
14 Sept - Judy Andrew, Kent Arnold, Nancy Tietjen	02 Oct - Diane Chapin	24 Oct - Elizabeth Sherfy, Thomas Trenkamp
16 Sept - Ryan McGill, Louise Plumb	03 Oct - John Sohl	25 Oct - Thomas Andrew
17 Sept - Donald McMahan	05 Oct - James Dart, Beatrice Laryea	28 Oct - Jack Dager
21 Sept - William Hartzog, Jason McFeaters	06 Oct - Meredith White	29 Oct - Fiona Asbury, Susan Mitchell
	07 Oct - Linda Knowles, Robert Plumb	30 Oct - Kendra Grams, Robert Karch
	08 Oct - Eileen Lee	31 Oct - William Lincoln
	09 Oct - Christopher Cyrway, John Galbreath, McCartney Van Brunt	

*"Happy Birthday, PPC" is part of the ministry of the Congregational Care Committee. If you want to share your birthday, please email the office (admin@potomacpresbyterian.org) to update our database.

FAMILY POTLUCKS

This year, the Fellowship Committee is again sponsoring periodic family potluck dinners. Families will gather for a potluck dinner at a member's home from 5:00-7:00pm on selected Sundays. Children will be invited to eat first. Then experienced caregivers will be on hand to help supervise the children and facilitate play activities. Accordingly, parents should be able to eat and converse without having to keep an "eagle eye" on their children.

Reserve the following "Family Potluck" Sundays on your calendar:

- September 27 (at the Hill Home, 9008 Quintana Drive, Bethesda)
- February 21, 2016 (location TBD)
- April 24, 2016 (at the Grigorian Farm, 15000 Sugarland Road, Poolesville).



Additionally, I challenge all of us at PPC to seek out at least one opportunity this year to nurture our young people (and ourselves) through intergenerational worship and relationships. Again, not sure where to start? Here are a few ideas:

- invite a family you know or don't know to sit with you in worship (or better yet, go sit with them)
- commit to praying for one young person in the congregation (I'd be happy to connect you with someone specific if you'd like)
- learn the names of some of our young people and greet them regularly by name

These are a few ideas to get us all moving more intentionally down the road to nurturing "sticky faith" in all our young people. Keep an eye out in future issues of the Steeple to People for more ideas! As we seek to nurture mature, sticky faith in our young people, I'm confident we will find our own Christian faith getting "sticker" as well!
In Christ, Pastor Kendra



**CHRISTIAN
EDUCATION**

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES

Classes meet from 9:45-10:45am on Sunday beginning September 13 (unless otherwise noted)

Children's Classes

Caring teachers will explore Bible stories with children in broadly-graded classes in the lower level of the church. Classes include Bible reading, arts and crafts, games, and music.

- Children **age three through second grade** will gather in room 5 for shared Bible story time before splitting into preschool/K and first/second grade groups for exploratory activities.
- **Third through fifth graders** will meet in room 4 for Bible reading, games, and other activities.

Youth Classes

The **Middle School Sunday School** (grades 6-8) will meet in the Middle School Lounge in the upper level of the church. They will explore and reflect on the Bible and what it teaches us about living out our Christian faith by learning about some of the key people in the Bible.

The **Confirmation Class** will meet in the Confirmation Room in the upper level of the church.

High Schoolers (grades 9-12) will gather in the High School Lounge from 11:45am-12:30pm on the second and fourth Sundays of October and November (10/11, 10/25, 11/8, and 11/22) for deeper study of the Scripture lesson and sermon from the morning, giving specific focus to how the lesson applies to their daily living. Discussions will be facilitated by high school seniors.

Adult Classes

Faith Matters meets in the Parlor for lively and thoughtful discussion about the Scripture passages that will be read in worship on Sunday mornings. (Beginning October 11)

The **Forum** class meets in the Library to hear and discuss presentations on a wide range of faith related topics.

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

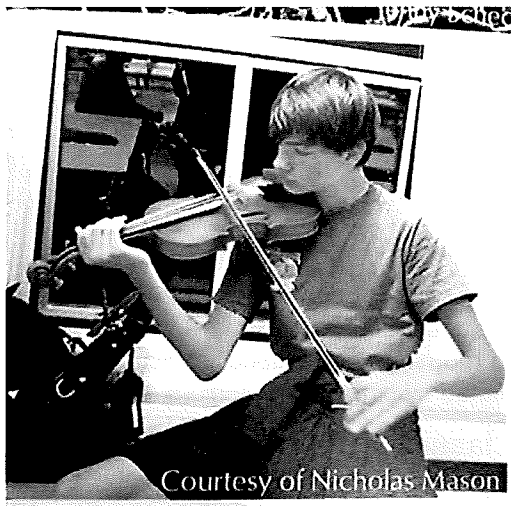
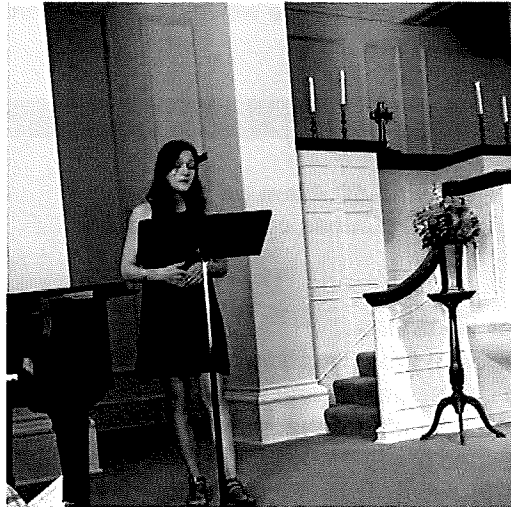
After a break for the summer, all the choirs at PPC will resume rehearsals this fall.

Choir/Handbell Rehearsals

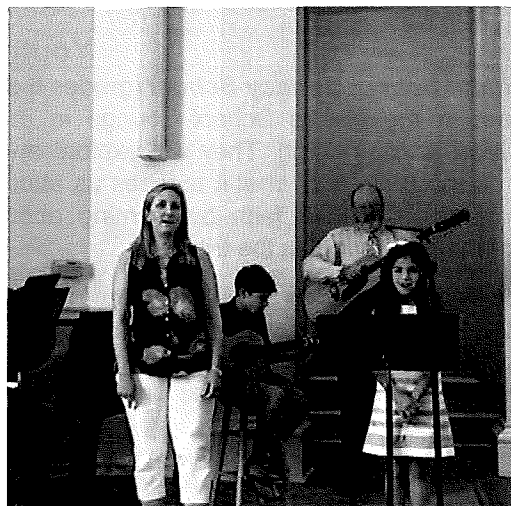
Begins Thursday, September 10, 2015
6:45pm Bell Choir, Thursdays
8:00pm Sanctuary Choir, Thursdays

Children's Choir

For children K through 5th Grade
New Rehearsal time:
Sundays immediately following worship
Begins Sunday, September 20, 2015



Courtesy of Nicholas Mason



Thank you to all our summer special musicians:
Pictured Clockwise from above left: *Carolyn McGill; Isabel Srour; Cyndy, Matthew, and Juliette Mamalian; and Nick Mason.* Not pictured: *Pat McMillan; Greg and Jennifer Robertson*



STEPHEN MINISTER TRAINEES NEEDED!

Training will enhance your relationships and your faith-we guarantee it!

Our new class of Stephen Ministers is scheduled to begin this fall. Currently three men and one woman have signed up for training and we have space for several more volunteers, especially two or three more women in the class. Classes commissioned in 2012 and 2014 continue to serve the many needs of our congregation, but we have a critical need to fill our new class as the needs to serve our congregation in this critical ministry have been expanding. Please prayerfully consider if you have the gifts of empathy and patience to serve in this life changing ministry. Training will provide all other necessary skills. For more information, contact Sherry Johnson, 301-765-8924, Karen Karch, 301-330-0633 or Bob Stow, 301-987-7085.

PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH (PASTCF)

The purpose of the PASTCF is to challenge and assist the Presbyterian Church (USA), at all levels, to study, understand, discuss, and act on the implications of science and technology as they affect the theology, worship, practice, and moral actions of the church; and to challenge and assist Presbyterian scientists, engineers, and other technical professionals to study, understand, discuss, and act on the implications of the Reformed theological tradition for their scientific and technical vocations.

Questions: John Norvell (norvellj@msn.com), Harry Tovmassian (hmtov@verizon.net), or Dave Stump (dcstump@ymail.com)

Fall Meeting Dates (Saturdays at 9:00am in PPC Library):

- September 12
- October 17
- November 21
- December 12

We plan to study the following books (beginning with the Giberson and Collins book on October 17):

- *The Language of Science and Faith: Straight Answers to Genuine Questions* by Karl W. Giberson and Francis S. Collins
- *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* by Sherry Turkle

MEN'S BOOK CLUB

The group meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10:30am in the church parlor. PPC members and non-members are welcome! Contact Ed Tennent (tennentmail@yahoo.com) with questions.

On September 16, the group will discuss *Life of Paul for Today* by Lyle D. Vander Broek.

On October 20, the group will discuss *The Admirals: The 5 Stars Who Won The War at Sea* by Walter Borneman.

ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

Men's Bible Study meets in the Parlor on Wednesday mornings from 6:30-7:15am. Whether you've been in studies before or you're coming to a study for the first time, please join us for 45 minutes of Bible study and prayer, all are welcome. Coffee and bagels provided. Classes begin on October 14.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study, meets in the Library on Wednesday mornings from 9:30-11:00am. The class is led by Pastor Sean. Classes will begin on September 16. (Note, until the parking lot is completed, this group will meet in Fellowship Hall)

NEW WOMEN'S MINISTRY - FAITH, HOPE, AND LUNCH

Women of Potomac Presbyterian Church are invited to join **Faith, Hope, and Lunch**, new PPC study groups for women that will read and discuss books relevant to living out our faith in today's world. These groups will meet on **Mondays at Noon in the PPC Parlor**, and its members will talk about assigned book chapters using guided questions, all while enjoying "bring your own" lunch together! In an effort to create a setting in which there can be significant discussion and sharing, *Faith, Hope and Lunch* groups will be limited to 10-12 women per group. Multiple groups will be created based on the interest level of PPC members, and groups will be led by PPC members with small group leadership coaching from Pastor Sean.

These groups will meet for 6 weeks in the fall (October 19- November 23), and then again for 8 weeks in the Spring (January 25-March 14). The book we will read in the fall is entitled *For the Love: Fighting for Grace in a World of Impossible Standards* by Jen Hatmaker and the book we will read in the spring is called *Sabbath in the Suburbs* by Maryann McKibben Dana. Both of these books are easy to read, thought provoking, entertaining, and raise questions about how we live out our faith in today's world. If you are interested in participating in *Faith, Hope, and Lunch*, please contact Susan Pereles (sdpereles@aol.com) or Cyndy Mamalian (cyndy@mamalian.com).

YOUTH MINISTRY

High School Youth Kick-off

High School students (grades 9-12) are invited to the *2015 PPC Amazing Race* on Sunday, September 20, from 6:00-8:00pm at the Mamalian Home (10631 Barn Wood Lane, Potomac). We'll also enjoy dinner together, share a devotional and prayer, and preview the year ahead. Friends welcome.

Middle School Youth Kick-off

Middle School students (grades 6-8) are invited to *Burgers and Monster Golf* on Friday, September 25, from 6:00-8:00pm. We'll gather at Five Guys in Gaithersburg (15784 Shady Grove Rd, Gaithersburg) for dinner and a devotion before walking down the street for a round of Monster Golf (9116 Gaither Road, Gaithersburg) where we will be for pick-up. Friends welcome. Please bring \$5 to defray costs (scholarships available).



CLERK OF SESSION REPORT, SUSAN HAYNES

The Session met for its regular August meeting. The focus of this meeting was a review of the summer activities and an assessment of the Committee plans for the new program year.

Sean opened the meeting with a review of the many PPC endeavors throughout the summer. The **Mission Trip to Athens, Ohio** was a great success. **VBS** enrolled 60 children, many from the community. Worship attendance has increased all summer. The **Parking Lot Project** is well underway, with a completion date in late September/early October. The **Congregational Care Committee** is very busy currently serving over 20 members. **Project Shine** continues to move forward as a way to fight two generation poverty.

Elder Kendall reported that the **July financials** are within budget. The church is currently undergoing an Audit for the years 2013 and 2014. This will make PPC current. Collection of the FFSF funds is on target.

Elder Nahabedian reported the change in position for Jeanne Grillo. She now has the title of Office Administrator and has the duties of the old Financial Secretary position. Discussions continue on the addition of several positions to support Christian Education and Worship. These **staff** additions will focus on children and youth ministry and older adult education.

Elder Bissey reported on the various **property upgrades**. These include new sink faucets, roof repair, completion of the sign upgrade and the installation of audio and video capability to stream live into Fellowship Hall, create DVD's and post audio on the website. AED training is in development. Nick Mason's Eagle Scout project creating the outdoor classroom is almost complete. The CE classroom upgrade is in the permitting phase, and will soon move to RFP requests.

Elder Kuhn reported that the **Communications Committee's** work to improve the website and outdoor sign was successful. Currently, social media communication is in development. A signature event is still in discussion.

Elder Hudgings provided an update on the other planned **Mission activities**. A work project with Stepping Stones Shelter or Interfaith Works is in discussion. The Christmas Tree Giving Project and Holiday Boxes will be offered again this year. Plans are underway to have a Mission Sunday in early 2016. The Mission Committee still has funds for several projects.

Kendra presented an update on **Christian Education** activities. Recruitment for Sunday School teachers is underway. Long term planning and benchmarks are being developed for the new program year. A confirmation class will be held this year for eighth grade students. Jack White proposed an internship position and will be a non-compensated **intern in youth ministry** for the upcoming program year. She also discussed the progression of the **Project Shine initiative**. Denise Peirson has agreed to be the Volunteer Coordinator for this PPC program. Another Volunteer Training Class will be held October 19, 2015. All are encouraged to attend and get involved in this exciting program. **Rally Day** is scheduled for Sunday, September 13, 2015 on the front lawn. This Kick-off event is chaired by Melissa Grigorian and Jen Gronkowski.

Other business included the report showing current average attendance for worship service to be 154. The baptism of Tobias Dale Carroll was approved and scheduled for August 30, 2015.

Additional information is available from your Elder representatives.

September 2015

September 2015							October 2015						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Aug 30	31	Sep 1 9:30am Fwd: Nominating Committee (Library or Call In) - Sean Miller 6:00pm Compassionate Friends	2 7:30pm Confirmation Student/Parent Meeting (Library)	3 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)	4 9:30am Teacher Orientation	5
6 10:00am Worship 11:00am Coffee and Refreshments 6:00pm PPC Family Serving Dinner at Sophia House	7 Labor Day - Office Closed	8	9 9:00am Fall Kitchen "Blast" (PPC Kitchen) 11:00am Staff Meeting (Library) 5:00pm Interment (Memorial Garden) 7:30pm Teacher Orientation	10 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	11	12 9:00am PASTCF (Library)
13 9:45am Christian Education for all ages 11:00am Worship - Rally Day, Commissioning 12:00pm Rally Day Carnival	14 1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 6:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm Committee Meetings	15 10:30am Men's Book Club (Parlor) 7:30pm Finance Committee	16 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Fellowship Hall) 11:00am Worship Committee 6:30pm Montgomery Bird Club	17 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	18 3:30pm GS Troop 5929	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Footsteps of Paul Trip						
9:45am Christian Education for all 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Coffee and 12:15pm Deacon Meeting 12:15pm Children's Choir (first	1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	6:00pm National Capital Presbytery Meeting	9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)	12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School Classroom) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir Loft)	6:00pm Middle School Kickoff (Monster Mini Golf, 9116 Gaither Road, Gaithersburg MD,)	
27	28	29	30	Oct 1	2	3
Footsteps of Paul Trip						
9:45am Christian Education for all 11:00am Worship 12:00pm Coffee and 12:15pm Children's Choir (first 5:00pm Family Pot Luck (Hill	1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)		9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)			

Potomac Presbyterian Church
10301 River Road
Potomac, MD 20854

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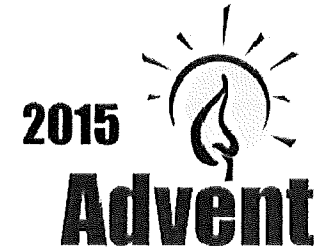


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The Steeple to People

Potomac Presbyterian Church
A spiritual destination within a growing congregation.

December 2015



Advent Service Opportunities

December 13
*Shoe Box Gifts &
Gift Giving Tree presents due*

December 15 5:30-8:00pm
Community Christmas Dinner

Sunday, November 29
First Sunday of Advent
11:00am Worship
"When Does Advent Begin?"
Luke 21:29-33

Wednesday,
December 16

7:30pm
**Longest Night of the
Year Service**

Sunday, December 13
Third Sunday of Advent
11:00am Worship
"Where Does the Line Start?"
Luke 3:7-18

Sunday, December 6
Second Sunday of Advent
9:30am Williamsburg Breakfast
11:00am Worship
"Where Do I Come From?"
Luke 3:1-6

For all who experience
grief or loss during this
season.

Nursery care provided

Sunday, December 20
Fourth Sunday of Advent
**9:45am Intergenerational
Christian Education**
11:00am Worship
Christmas Pageant

Potomac Presbyterian Church

Rev. Sean Miller, Pastor

Rev. Kendra Grams, Associate Pastor for Family Ministries

Tom Andrew, Director of Music and Organist

301-299-6007, www.potomacpresbyterian.org

*We are an active Christian community devoted to
worship that stirs the soul,
education that engages the mind,
and service that sends us into the world*

Christmas Eve
Thursday, December 24

4:00pm Family Candlelight Worship
7:00pm & 11:00pm Candlelight Communion Worship

"Fear Not?"

Luke 2:1-20

Nursery care provided for 4:00pm & 7:00pm services



THE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS DINNER
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, BEGINNING AT 5:30 PM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

Several years ago, Interim Pastor Larry Duncan held a Bible study on Sunday mornings in the Parlor. In one of those conversations, members of the church began to discuss ways to put their faith into action during the Advent and Christmas seasons. The Christmas Holiday Dinner was born.

The Christmas Dinner is an opportunity to throw wide open the doors of the church to guests and friends who come regularly for food assistance on the second Tuesday of the month. Since September, I have been leading a Bible study with many of these dear friends who come from near and far for rest and nourishment—what Jesus called “daily bread.” I am richly blessed to meet and pray with these dear friends. They are beloved in our church community.

By the time December 15 comes, we will all be a bit more harried and hurried than usual. Our minds will be on our plans and our shopping. Take an opportunity to come and share a meal with guests who call our church home every month. Bring the whole family. If you wish, sign up to help, serve, set up, or clean up, on the PPC website, www.potomacpresbyterian.org.

This is one of my personal highlights of the Advent season, if not the whole year. I am grateful for all who are contributing to this meal in one way or another, and I know that it is a lot to ask a church to put on a huge dinner right in the middle of December!

But that is what you do—and you do so well—you are opening the doors in new ways to the community, and what better way to do that than to host a meal during the season in which we remember the coming of Christ into the world. ~ Pastor Sean



WE CONTINUE TO KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS...



We continue to keep in our prayers... We continue to keep in our prayers... the Members of the Armed Forces; Mary Reichley; Preston Abee, brother-in-law of Julie McMahon; Dave Gorman, son of Nancy Tietjen and brother of Beth Rudnic; Betsy Sanders and Naomi Gerwin, sisters of Marcia Boogaard; Terry Fortune, son-in-law of Martha Brame; Patty Dunnavant; Ed Ebert; Genie Rudmann, cousin of Dan Dowd; Del Smith; Cam Sanders, nephew of Marcia Boogaard; the family of Lily McKee, friend of Liz Kent; Pam Drumheller; Rich McMahon; DeAndra Jones; Chris McKee; Millie Rowan; Denise Poole; Alan Beck; Neal Elsberry, husband of Gray Bedingfield; Lori Beck, daughter of Alan Beck

Please contact Jeanne Grillo, admin@potomacpresbyterian.org, 301-299-6007, if you have a prayer concern that you would like to be printed in the bulletin.



On **Tuesday, February 9, 2016** Potomac Presbyterian Church's Fellowship Hall will be filled with the smell of hotcakes, the sounds of jazz music and the buzz of great conversation when we host a Pancake Dinner with lots of toppings! This event is a fundraiser in support of our Mission Trip Team and local mission efforts along with a wonderful opportunity to invite our community through our doors for some warm hospitality! Mark your calendars now and plan to attend along with some friends! Tickets will go on sale after the first of the new year.



A NEW OPPORTUNITY: Keith Dorset, our A/V contractor has agreed to be with us for a briefing session on the capabilities of our new A/V systems in Fellowship Hall and the Sanctuary. On Sunday, December 13, after worship at 12:30pm, we invite those audio/video buffs and others who are interested in operating the system(s) to join us for training. New capabilities include wireless mic for local audio enhancement for sanctuary and Fellowship Hall meetings/activities including audio and/or video recording: video projection system in Fellowship Hall which can accept sanctuary camera, laptop or DVDs (for movies, etc.); Bluetooth connectivity to iPhones to play music at events in Fellowship Hall; plus we have a pan/tilt/zoom camera in the sanctuary with remote control and video recording. It is important that we build a cadre of people of all ages, especially the youth, so we have a pool to turn on and off the right systems for particular events, and, if necessary, control the operation. Please confirm with Charlie Nahabedian (cnahabed@gmail.com) or Jeanne Grillo (jgrillo@potopres.org) if you can attend.

PPC AT SOPHIA HOUSE



On behalf of the mission committee and myself, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all the families that contributed to Sophia House during this year.

We are now approaching 2016 and once again we are continuing this project, but as always your assistance is needed on a monthly basis to help those in our community who are less fortunate than us. Potomac Presbyterian Church is responsible for feeding about 30 women dinner on the first Sunday of each month at Sophia House in Rockville. We also provide breakfast items for the following morning.

A sign-up sheet is posted in Fellowship Hall for 2016 and your cooperation will be appreciated as we continue this very worthwhile project in our community.

Marnel Williams, on behalf of the Mission Committee

LIBRARY NEWS

The Collected Sermons of Fred Craddock



The puzzle of Fred B. Craddock, the beloved and well-known preacher of our time, is - how does he see the sort of things we all see and yet see MORE than we see? Between the covers of this book is a sacred treasury of more than fifty sermons preached by this servant of God over a period of years. Here - a man with great skills in theology and philosophy as well as biblical studies and homiletics but also one who noticed a lot about ordinary human life on earth.

Using simple language to convey instructive and difficult truths, Craddock had the remarkable ability to construct a sermon which connected viscerally with his listeners, sometimes evoking reactions such as, "I never thought about it that way or "Yep, I know that person". Sometimes these truths and Craddock's candor shocks, but, on reflection, his words resonate with a power that stirs and causes us to ponder. We have been drawn in. We - his audience- have become an essential part of his message as well as beneficiaries of his unique mastery of the art of preaching.

You savor "Praying through Clenched Teeth" on page 241 with a new take on Saul's conversion. And then there's "And Jesus Also", page 147. Luke says "Now when all the people were baptized and when JESUS ALSO had been baptized" and it sounds like Jesus was in the one line with all that strange assortment of people. In lines, everybody just sort of seems the same, whether you've stood on the center podium at the Olympics or scrambled for your next meal. But the invitation into the kingdom of God is quite simple. A voice says, "Next!"

Whenever you're needing a refreshing meditation, pick out a Craddock sermon and drink it in.....

November 28, 9am

Advent Decorating

Come join us in decorating the church.
Coffee and donuts provided

CHRISTMAS PLANTS

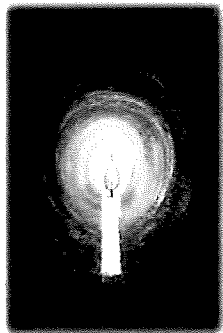
Please consider making a donation to the Christmas Decorating Fund in memory or honor of a loved one. Place donations in the pew envelopes. Please note "Christmas Flowers" on your check. Donation envelopes can be placed in the offering plate, mailed to the church, or dropped off in the church office. Memorial and honor dedications will be listed in the Christmas Eve bulletins. **Donations deadline is Sunday, December 6.**

LONGEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR SERVICE

Who among us has not longed for quiet and simplicity during Advent? Who among us has not felt the sting of loss or the pain of grief more acutely during this season? Who among us as not longed for hope in a broken and fearful world?

We encourage everyone to attend a special worship service of reflection, silence, music, and hope, called "The Longest Night of the Year." This worship service will be held on **Wednesday, December 16, at 7:30 pm in the Sanctuary.** Everyone in our family church is invited and encouraged to attend. Think especially of a neighbor, friend, or family member, who may be feeling a little "blue" during this season, and extend a warm invitation to them.

Scripture declares, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." May it be so for all of us during this busy Season. May we find and hear the simple yet profound promise that a Savior will be born. Blessings, Pastors Sean and Kendra



FROM THE ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Last Advent was a special time for my husband Ted and I as we prepared for the birth of our son, Toby. Not surprisingly, I was particularly moved by Mary's story in new and deep ways. Filled with wonder at the child growing within me, I could not help but ponder the magnitude of what Mary felt knowing that the child she would deliver would soon deliver her—and the world. I listened near endlessly to "Mary Did You Know" by a cappella group Pentatonix (check it out on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifCWN5pJGIE>) with fresh ears, deep emotion, and compassion for Mary and all she must have felt.

Now, nearing the first birthday of our son, many of my thoughts and feelings from last Advent have magnified, while others have faded from importance in the blur of being mom-wife-pastor-child of God-daughter-friend-colleague. But one line of "Mary Did You Know" continues to speak to me in new, thought-provoking, and life-giving ways: "Mary, did you know...when you kiss your little Baby you kissed the face of God?"

Certainly, it's true that Mary kissed the face of God when she laid the Baby Jesus down to sleep at night (perhaps after endless hours of walking and bouncing). But this year, as I've kissed Toby good-night and laid him in his crib, I believe that I have the honor and blessing of kissing the face of God in a different way. As I've seen Toby grow (so much and so fast), it continues to amaze me the pure joy and love he can exude. To me, it's the purest expression of his being created *in the image of God*—as we all are.

And being reminded that God came into the world not only in Jesus Christ, but also dwells in each of us, has reshaped how I think of moments spent with youth expressing their deepest fears, adults daring to be vulnerable about how ragged they feel, children asking honest questions, and all people facing the unknown which comes with grief, illness, or transition. These moments, in which the inhibitions imposed by time and culture are stripped away, feel increasingly like opportunities to "kiss" (to touch or deeply connect with) that bit of the *image of God* in each of us.

So this Advent, I am seeking to be expectant in a new way. I am seeking to name and celebrate the little moments when, in the midst of the everyday, we dare to embrace the divine spark in each of us and let it shine through. I am seeking to name and celebrate the little moments when we let the inhibitions imposed by time and culture fall away. And I am expectant...

I invite you to watch, to notice, to be expectant with me. May we all come to appreciate the gift of the Christ Child more deeply as we seek to name where God is dwelling in each of us.

In Christ,

Pastor Kendra

SHOE BOX MISSION

For the past three Christmases, our congregation has provided more than 100 Christmas boxes for our neighbors at the Community Vision Shelter in Silver Spring. The Shelter, supported by Interfaith Works, is one of Montgomery County's winter weather shelters providing a safe and warm bed to sleep in for 70 people each night from November 1 through April 1. The Shelter also runs a day program providing services critical to the safety and well-being of homeless men and women in the county.



COMMUNITY VISION

invites you to participate in our

2015 Holiday Gift Project

*We want to provide every client
with a wrapped nondenominational gift*

distributed on Christmas Eve!

*200 total top and bottom separately wrapped
shoeboxes or other small boxes are needed from a
variety of our caring partners*

and can include some or all of the following:

Target or Wal-Mart gift cards (\$5, \$10, \$15), SmarTrip cards, a pair of NEW CREW socks (men's or women's), lip balm, deodorant (any size, men's or women's), HOTEL OR TRAVEL SIZE TOILETRIES (unopened shampoo, body wash, bar soap, lotion, NON-ALCOHOLIC hand sanitizer, shaving cream, pocket calendars, candy bars, granola bars, and bottled water

The tops and bottoms of the boxes must be wrapped separately, so that the boxes can be opened while wrapped. **Please leave the boxes in Fellowship Hall by Sunday, December 13.** If you have any questions about this project or need empty boxes, please contact Janet Dunlop, janetdunlop@comcast.net or (301)838-0583. Your generosity in supporting this mission to some of our most needy neighbors will be most gratefully appreciated.





WILLIAMSBURG BREAKFAST

Hosted by the PPC Deacons

Sunday, December 6, 2014, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall

Please arrive early to enable us to start on time.

Please bring a breakfast food to share (to serve 6) and a small bell to ring during carol singing.

Children in fifth grade and younger will be served first and then go to their classrooms. Youth are invited to stay and participate in the program.

**** All leftovers will be donated to a local shelter. ****

You may pick up an ornament from the Gift Giving Tree and spread the joy of Christmas to a family in need.



Gift Giving Tree

This year at the Williamsburg Breakfast the Mission Committee will again have a Gift Giving Tree to spread the joy of Christmas to children and their families in the community. Our tree will be covered with cards, each with the name of a child and a suggested gift from his/her wish list. **We ask members to pick a child's name from the tree, purchase the gift, wrap it, and bring to Fellowship Hall before worship the following Sunday, December 13.** Plan to shop with your children or grandchildren and let them help you pick the perfect gift. This is a great way to learn about the joy of giving. We also are asking for donations for the purchase of \$20 Giant grocery gift cards to distribute to their parents. Please help us make Christmas special for these families. For questions, please call Kay Norvell, 301-530-1498..

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT



As a special blessing to the PPC family, worship on Sunday, December 20, will be led entirely by the children of the congregation as they present the annual Children's Christmas Pageant. The children will help us ponder again the miracle of God coming to live among us and prepare ourselves to welcome Christ into our hearts again this Christmas.

As we do each Sunday in Advent, we will light candles as a sign of our expectant waiting and preparation. We light candles to celebrate and remember the hope, love, joy, and peace that a tiny baby brought to the world on an extraordinary night in Bethlehem almost 2000 years ago.

In addition, the children will lead us in hearing and experiencing the story of the Christ Child's birth. The children will read and act out the story of Christmas, and together, we'll sing many favorite Christmas carols.

Make sure to arrive early for worship that Sunday so that you don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity to ponder the ministry of God's gift of Immanuel, God with us.



December 2015

December 2015							January 2016						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
6	7	1	2	3	4	5	3	4	5	6	7	1	2
13	14	8	9	10	11	12	10	11	12	13	14	8	9
20	21	15	16	17	18	19	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	22	23	24	25	26	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
		29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Nov 29	30	Dec 1	2	3	4	5
		9:30am Art Class 6:00pm Compassionate Friends 7:00pm Stephen Ministry Training (Library)	6:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Library) 7:00pm Confirmation/Mentor Orientation 8:00pm Student/Parent/Dessert	12:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry (parlor) 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 2:00pm Bulletin Review 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir)		Williamsburg Breakfast Set up 9:00am Confirmand/Mentor Retreat (National Cathedral)
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:30am Williamsburg Breakfast 9:45am Christian Education for 11:00am Worship - Second 12:00pm Coffee and 12:15pm Board of Deacons 12:15pm Children's Choir (first	1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	9:30am Art Class 7:00pm Stephen Ministry Training (Library)	6:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Library) 6:30pm Montgomery Bird Club	12:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 2:00pm Bulletin Review 4:00pm Pageant Rehearsal 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir)	3:30pm GS Troop 5929 6:00pm Middle School Christmas Party (Mamalian home)	9:00am PASTCF (Library) 6:00pm High School Christmas Party (TBD)
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
9:45am Christian Education for all 11:00am Worship - Third Sunday 12:00pm Coffee and 12:00pm Pageant Rehearsal with 12:15pm Children's Choir (first 12:15pm AV Training	1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library) 6:00pm Congregational Care Committee (Parlor) 7:30pm Committee Meetings	9:30am Art Class 10:30am Men's Book Club (Parlor) 5:30pm Christmas Community Meal 7:00pm Stephen Ministry	6:30am Men's Bible Study 9:30am Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Library) 7:30pm Longest Night of the Year Worship	12:00pm Prayer Shawl Ministry 12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 2:00pm Bulletin Review 4:00pm Pageant Rehearsal 6:45pm Bell Choir (Middle School) 8:00pm Sanctuary Choir (Choir)		9:00am Pageant Dress Rehearsal
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9:45am Intergenerational Christian Education/Service 11:00am Worship - Pageant/Fourth Sunday in 12:00pm Coffee and 12:30pm Session Meeting	1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	9:30am Art Class		12:00pm AA Meeting (Library) 4:00pm Family Worship 7:00pm Communion Worship 11:00pm Worship with Communion by Intinction	Christmas Day - Office Closed	
27	28	29	30	31	Jan 1, 16	2
11:00am Worship - College Students Lead Worship 12:00pm Coffee and Refreshments (Fellowship Hall)	1:00pm Staff Meeting (Library)	9:30am Art Class		12:00pm AA Meeting (Library)		

