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Follow the Fun

By Kenneth Kovacs

Vocation. Calling. We serve a God who summons us, calls us, shouts out to us: Come. Go. Heal. Be my people. Serve my people. Love my people. Yes, but where? How? We say.

Decades ago, in his helpful book *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC* (HarperOne, 1993), the Presbyterian minister and writer Frederick Buechner offered what has become a well-known definition of a vocation: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." This is a pretty good description of what a

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"Follow the Fun"

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call might look like, and it helps one to identify the place where one is called—if one can find the place, that is.

I agree with my friend and colleague MaryAnn McKibben Dana that there's something a bit static about Buechner's take. I've always appreciated Buechner's insights and wisdom. His sermons had an enormous influence on my life as a Christian. In her latest work, *God, Improv, and the Art of Living* (Eerdmans, 2018), MaryAnn offers a critique of Buechner's approach. "I know many people whose work is nowhere near that sweet spot of personal satisfaction and societal need. Their 'true calling' feels beyond their reach. I can see how they would feel like their gladness and the world's need never intersect, but instead run parallel to each other" (173).

Instead, MaryAnn suggests that we follow a different dictum as one that has come to mean a lot to me in recent years. It's from the African-American pastor-theologian-mystic Howard Thurman (1899-1981). He said, "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and go do that.

Because what the world needs is people who have come alive." This advice might sound self-serving or selfish, but it really isn't. It's an invitation to come alive—and isn't this what God wants for us?

In improv theatre, MaryAnn tells us, there is a guiding principal: "follow the fun." In improv, an actor tracks the energy. "We're on the lookout," she says, "for the scene or character or idea that gives us joy, and then we pursue that to see where it takes us" (174). We can learn much about ministry and being church in this approach. What if we, as in improv, learned to track and trust the energy? What if we learned to track and trust the joy? See where it takes us. See where it leads us. Note the places, moments, experiences when you sense yourself coming more alive. "For where your treasure is," Jesus said, "there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). Where are you being called to say "Yes" to what is coming alive in you? Where are we being called to say "Yes!" to what God is bringing to life in us and through us as a church? ✚

We Choose Welcome Brunch

By Susan Krehbiel

On June 30, more than 30 people attended the Welcome Brunch, with guest speaker Tiffany Nelms, the Executive Director of Asylee Women Enterprise in Baltimore. The Mission Committee will be following up regarding interest in a future visit to one of the AWE programs, as well as a partnership with volunteering and donation opportunities.



Sacred Stories

Our Summer Sermon Series

Sundays in July and August

We are a storied people. Everyone has one. Sometimes we are free, even eager, to tell our story; sometimes we're reluctant to share—often for good reasons. Children, as well as adults, love a good story. Some of us are even gifted storytellers. And everyone is situated in a larger story or narrative—the story of our family, community, faith, nation. And, of course, there's the ever-unfolding story of God's creation, love, and redemption of the world which we are living.

Sundays in July and August, the scripture text and sermon will explore one aspect of our storied lives in Christ. And each week a member of our community will tell a story from his/her life, sharing a formative moment or defining experience that continues to shape who they are. This is an invitation for us to honor our stories, honor the stories of our neighbors, these sacred stories that narrate our lives.

- July 14: Remembering Our Story—Mark 5:1-20
- July 21: Losing Our Story—Genesis 21:9-21
- July 28: Surprising Characters—Acts 8:26-40
- August 4: Table Tales—1 Corinthians 11:23-26



- August 11: Too Good Not to Be True—Acts 17:16-33
- August 18: New Beginnings—Genesis 12:1-9
- August 25: Our Precious Lives—Psalm 8

“Tell me your story, your pain, your suffering, your cry, your needs. Tell me about your childhood, tell me what you maybe remember. Tell me. Tell me your dreams. Tell me your hopes.”

—Jean Vanier (1928-2019), Roman Catholic philosopher, humanist, and Founder of L'Arche

Fellowship Committee

—needs you!

By Alison Enokian

Are you looking for a way to be more involved in Catonsville Presbyterian Church? Do you like cookies and coffee? Then perhaps the Fellowship Hour Team is for you! The Fellowship Committee is looking for people to help with Fellowship Hour, which follows worship each Sunday morning. If you are interested, please email Alison Enokian at aenokian@gmail.com or text Alison at 410-913-6759. Bonus: no monthly meetings to attend!

Presbyterian Women's Synod Summer Gathering 2019

By Connie Renner, 2019 Gathering Co-Chair

Overview About the Gathering

The four days of the Summer Gathering were blessed by God. They were enhanced by pleasant weather, great speakers, and the hard work of the twenty-two women who made up the Planning Team. These women worked for a year to bring the details together. Usually, the theme of the Gathering is set by the topic of the National PW Bible Study for the upcoming program year. This year the Bible Study topic was The 10 Commandments. Gideon Amir, a scholar of the Talmud, was invited to help us understand the Jewish interpretation of the commandments. Joyce MacKichen Walker, the author of the Leaders' guide for the study, highlighted certain parts of the study during the Plenary Sessions and in workshops.

Call to Worship

In recognition of our Hebrew heritage and because we were going to be talking about The Ten Commandments there was a Shofar (ram's horn) blown to call everyone to worship. The Shofar was loaned to Gathering Co-Chair Joan Berry by a synagogue in Baltimore.

Then the Opening Ceremony started with the procession of banners from the 13 Presbyteries to the music of "When the Saints Go Marching In," followed by the Lighting of the Christ Candle, and prayer which opened the Gathering.

We hosted a Midrash. A discussion between these two learned people, Gideon and Joyce, followed as they discussed the Jewish and Christian understandings of the Commandments. It was a casual atmosphere as we, the audience, were enlightened and amused by their comments

Workshops Offered

Of the 12 workshops we offered, two of them dealt with issues from the news. One was the ME TOO! Movement that dealt with the problem of the abuse of women. For that, women were encouraged to write, anonymously, on a t-shirt about the abuse they had experienced and then hang the t-shirt on the clothesline to air their hurt, perhaps release their anger, and help it heal. A total of eleven t-shirts hung there before the end and most of them quoted scripture that had helped them rise again after the trauma of their abuse.

The other workshop was about the national tragedy of addiction. There were two workshops about this and the leader was so frank about her history of addiction that almost all those in each workshop came to her privately afterward and admitted that they were an addict, and they had never before told anyone. Think about the healing that can start by those admissions. Just because we are Church Women doesn't mean that we are perfect. We are all flawed and we need to be welcoming of everyone and humble about who we are. God alone is perfect.

We got to know ourselves better, met old and new friends, and left looking forward to the Bible Study and next year's Gathering. We on the Planning Team were thrilled to be used by God to make this all happen. Thank you, God!

Meet New Members

Jessica, Brewster, and Olena Renn

Welcome Jess, Brewster, and Olena Renn, who joined us in May as new members. While Jess is a native Marylander, Brewster moved here from Massachusetts, and together the couple moved to Catonsville in 2015.

When asked what brought the family to Catonsville Presbyterian, Jess said, "We were married at Lower Brandywine Presbyterian Church in Wilmington and were struck by how welcoming the church was, so when we were looking to join a church our first stop was Catonsville Presbyterian. We were looking for a welcoming and open-minded faith-based community to become a part of and felt we found that at Catonsville Presbyterian!" To date, the family has most enjoyed the children's part of the service and the events that help others in our community.



Brewster is a High School Special Educator and enjoys coaching soccer, cooking, and games. Jess is a Data Scientist and enjoys sports and reading. The family welcomed Olena 18 months ago.

Poetry and the Christian Life

By Ken Kovacs

Poet Ann Quinn and I have chosen a poem for the month of July by Gerard Manley Hopkins, "God's Grandeur." Read it slowly, ponder it, reflect on it, let it speak to you, even pray it.

God's Grandeur

By Gerard Manley Hopkins

*The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.*

*And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.*

Join Us for Discussion

Wednesday, July 17, at 7:00 p.m. in the Library

...illuminates the sacred in the everyday ... invites us to turn a lazy Saturday morning breakfast ... or the end of a stressful day into an opportunity to look for God, hiding in plain sight."
— Rachel Held Evans

FAITHFUL FAMILIES

CREATING SACRED MOMENTS AT HOME



TRACI SMITH

Originally titled *Seamless Faith* — now with more practices

Christian Education Faithful Families

Join us for Faithful Families on Sunday, September 8, 2019. At 9:00 a.m. on Kickoff Sunday, parents are invited to a workshop presented by the Christian Education Committee highlighting this excellent resource by Traci Smith. Offering ways to “Create Sacred Moments at Home,” we’ll introduce you to “more than 50 easy-to-implement, meaningful ideas for transforming your family’s everyday activities into sacred moments.”

Watch the September newsletter for details of our church school ministry as well as information about additional ministries and programs. Church school for age 3 through high school begins at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 8. Child care is provided for infants age two beginning at 9:00 a.m. Hint: New ministries coming for families with young children!



Introducing Bernard Lawson

Meet Bernard Lawson our new sexton, who joined the Catonsville Presbyterian staff in early June. Bernard, who has lived in Edmondson village since 1968, has been a custodian for more than 20 years. His passion and hobbies are in coaching both little league baseball and football, as well as going to the gym and fishing.

As for being on board at Catonsville Presbyterian Church, Bernard states that he is impressed on how much the church is utilized for different events. He said, “So far the thing that I enjoy the most about working at Catonsville Presbyterian are the people, everyone is so nice. I look forward to getting to know the members of the congregation and becoming involved in some of the activities.”

You’ll find him around the church weekdays, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. He looks forward to meeting the members of the church and working with us.

Session Meeting Highlights

The Session is a body of fifteen members, elected by the congregation and ordained as ruling elders, who provide leadership for our congregation. Following are highlights of the regular monthly Session meeting of June 5, 2019.

■ The Finance Committee reported that the church has a small surplus of income versus expenses for the year to date, but we must remember that the annual budget predicts a shortfall, so members are urged to keep their pledges up to date throughout the summer.

■ The Session approved a request from the Presbytery of Baltimore to hold its February 13, 2019, gathering at Catonsville Presbyterian. Church members will be asked to volunteer for such functions as welcoming visitors, assisting with parking, food preparation and serving, etc.

■ Representatives of Cub Scouts, sponsored by Catonsville Presbyterian, requested approval to follow national Cub Scout policy and begin admitting girls to the pack. They also requested permission to hold a popcorn fundraiser after worship on several Sundays in September. Session approved both requests.

■ The Nominating Committee presented two nominees to Session for approval: Tom Enokian for Deacon, class of 2021, and Erin Flis for Child Care Council, class of 2021. Session approved both nominations, which will be presented to the congregation for election.

■ The Session had a conversation about reviewing and evaluating the Envision Fund after the first five years of operation of the Fund. The Fund has been a great success, disbursing over \$500,000 to worthwhile causes locally, nationally and internationally. While many aspects of the Fund philosophy and organization were discussed, no decisions were made, and it will be an item on the docket for a future meeting.

Session recognizes the need to continually communicate with our membership, and we welcome your suggestions for communication exchange. Session member contact information is listed in the Church Directory, so it is easy to communicate directly with your church leaders. Take a few minutes to send a message to a Session member, the pastors, or the church office, and let us know what you think. We want to hear from you!

*—David Hutton, Clerk of Session
(dhutton1@verizon.net)*

Our Financial Resources

We rely on everyone to support what God is doing through this congregation. The vitality of this ministry is secured by God's grace and funded by the faithfulness and commitment of God's people. We are counting on the ongoing generosity of our members and friends. Thank you!

—Keith Glennan, Finance Committee

Actual income as of June 15:	\$ 266,132
Actual expense as of June 15:	\$-269,987
Total:	\$ 3,855

Scouts Update

By Glenda K. Johnson
Chartered Organization Representative

Boy Scout News

The Boy Scout Troop has enjoyed a very busy summer. Their June camping trip took them to Calvert Cliffs Park for fossil hunting and a camping weekend. On July 4th, the Troop setup and took down the American flags displayed along Frederick Road for the holiday. Summer camp was held at Camp Heritage in Pennsylvania July 6-13 with 27 scouts and 6 adults attending this yearly event. Eleven boys who are new scouts participated in special programs to cover many of the basic requirements. August is the time for the family pool party and planning for the September Arts Festival.

Cub Scouts

Cub Scouts completed its first summer activity on June 29 with a 2.5 mile hike and visit to the visitors center at Soldier's Delight in Reisterstown. In mid July, the Cubs and parents hiked the Trolley Trail. August plans have been made to go to Goddard Space Flight Center for a STEM related program. Plans are well underway for the annual popcorn sale, the major fundraiser for the Pack. Since they had such a successful sale last year, they can start at an earlier date. The Catonsville Presbyterian Session has granted the Cubs an opportunity to "Show and Sell" some of their popular products during Fellowship Hour on September 8, 15, and 22. Session has also approved the Pack's request to accept girls beginning this 2019-2020 program year.

Become a Scout

Both groups are active year round with their respective scouting and community service programs. Scouting is filled with adventure, family, fun, leadership and so much more. Pack 306 meets at Catonsville Presbyterian Church during the school year on Wednesday evenings. Fall registration is simple. Just join us on the first Wednesday evening of September to fill out the required forms and pay dues.

Backpacks for Success

School Supply Drive

The Board of Deacons has begun its annual drive for new school supplies in conjunction with Catonsville Emergency Assistance and Grace A.M.E. Church to assist families in Catonsville. Through your generosity and support, we can prepare those in need for the school year and help families relieve financial stress. To become involved, please place donations in the bins to the right of the stage in fellowship hall. If you prefer to make a monetary donation, make checks payable to CPC with Backpacks for Success on the memo line.

Collection Time and Questions

Last day of collections is Sunday, August 25. Volunteers are needed that day to assemble the backpacks. For questions or to volunteer, contact Jenny Hutton at jenhutton2010@gmail.com, or Susan Schultise at susancs4139@gmail.com. Thank you for your support!

Supply List

- Backpack book bag, no wheels
- Ruler, metric and standard measurements
- Two "marble" composition books
- Washable magic markers
- One large eraser
- Pencil sharpener, cap for shavings
- Twelve pencils #2
- Pencil top erasers
- Pencil box
- One pack of crayons
- School glue
- Two glue sticks
- Scissors
- Three ballpoint pens
- Highlighter
- Five pocket folders
- Colored pencils

GODSPELL Performance

We enjoyed a wonderful performance of GODSPELL in our fellowship hall on Sunday, June 2. A talented cast conveyed this retelling of the gospel of Matthew in story and song to a nearly sold-out crowd. Many thanks go to Ellen Frank for her incredible dedication as the organizer and director of this venture. We're grateful, too, for the volunteer efforts of Jenny Hutton (Set Design and Construction), Andrew Glennan (Sound Technician), Paula Beck (Program Design), Musicians Greg Knauf and Hikaru Belzer, and behind-the-scenes-crew and day-of-show assistants Cole Percy, Lars Nilsen, Annika Nilsen, Rhys Peercy, Katrina Bucher, Donna Bucher, and Kristy Seechuk. We are also thankful for our generous donors who contributed funds and time and talent to help make this possible.

All who saw the show were indeed blessed, and we give another round of applause to cast members Sadie Rose, Christopher Kennedy, Stella Rose, Peyton Davis, Paige Percy, Brynn Davis, Rose Ocone, Bentley Cech and Lucas Rose.

Left photograph back row: Annika, Cole, Paula, Rhys, and front row: Lars. Right photograph: Ellen, Bentley, Chris, Sadie, Lucas, Brynn, Peyton, Paige, Rose, and Stella.



Please Welcome

On May 19, we welcomed new members to Catonsville Presbyterian Church.

The new members group photograph includes from left to right: Thomas A. Enokian, Anne C. Colantoni, Nathan M. Scalla, Elizabeth Scalla, Olena Renn, Jessica W. Renn, and Brewster Renn.

Personal Care Kits

By Glenda K. Johnson

The Personal Care Kit project, sponsored by Lutheran World Relief and IMA World Health, was a very successful one! On Saturday, June 8, a group of volunteers assembled 288 personal care kits to help people whose homes have been destroyed by natural disasters, or for those who have fled their homes for personal safety.

On assembly day, we were delighted to welcome Vicky Whetstone from Lutheran World Relief, Robin Price from Grace AME, and Corinda Jones also from Grace AME. That day, Vicky Whetstone shared information about the importance of this kit's use and demonstrated the correct way to wrap and tie each one.

After all of our expenses, we sent \$763.20 (\$2.65 shipping and handling x 288 kits) as well as a donation of \$744.67 to Lutheran World Relief for their ongoing kit fund. Our generosity will serve many people and will be a blessing to those who receive them. Many thanks are extended to everyone who sponsored kits and volunteered to assemble them in June!



Life in the Community

Welcome New Little Ones

- Introducing Elianna White Maze, born on May 7, 2019, to Michelle Hippert. Elianna joins her brother Julian.
- Welcome Colin Daniel Griffin, born on May 29, 2019, to Amanda and Kurt Griffin. Colin joins his brother Jackson.
- Announcing McComas Peters Bender, born June 13, 2019, to Milli and Mike Bender. McComas joins his brother Frank. Congratulations to all! We are so glad you are here.

CPC Calendar



EVERY WEEK

SUNDAYS

9:30 a.m. Worship, Summer Schedule

MONDAYS

7-9 p.m. Martial Arts, Fellowship Hall

TUESDAYS

9-11 a.m. Al-Anon, France Room
10 a.m. Needles Group, Library
7-9 p.m. Charm City Dancers, Gym
7-9:30 p.m. Martial Arts, Fellowship Hall

THURSDAYS

5:30-6:30 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous, Library
7-9:30 p.m. Kung Fu, Fellowship Hall
7:30-9 p.m. Boy Scouts, Scout Rooms and Gym

MONDAY, July 22

6 p.m. Contemplative Prayer/Meditation,
France Room

WEDNESDAY, July 24

7:30 p.m. Trustees, Conf Room

SUNDAY, July 28

9:30 a.m. Worship, Fellowship Hall
10:45 a.m. Peace and Justice Com, France Room

MONDAY, July 29

7:30 p.m. Adult Education Meeting, Church House
Conference Room

WEDNESDAY, July 31

7 p.m. No Deacons Mtg, Library

UPCOMING IN JULY

SUNDAY, July 14

9:30 a.m. Worship, Fellowship Hall
10:45 a.m. Session Lunch and Retreat, France Room

MONDAY, July 15

7-8:30 p.m. Trivia Night, Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY, July 17

6:15-7:45 p.m. Alzheimer's Caregivers' Support
Group, France Room
7 p.m. Poetry and the Christian Life, Library
7 p.m. Envision Board, Conf Room
7 p.m. Child Care Council, CR Room

SATURDAY, July 20

9 a.m.-Noon: Presbyterian Women of Baltimore
Presbytery, Conf Room
1-4 p.m. Tai Chi, Gym

SUNDAY, July 21

9:30 a.m. Worship, Fellowship Hall
10:45 a.m. Christian Education Com, France Room

UPCOMING IN AUGUST

SATURDAY, August 3

1-4 p.m. Tai Chi, Gym

SUNDAY, August 4

9:30 a.m. Worship, Communion, Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY, August 7

7 p.m. Session, Library

THURSDAY, August 8

7-9 p.m. Cub Scout Com, Library

SUNDAY, August 11

9:30 a.m. Worship, Fellowship Hall

MONDAY, August 12

6 p.m. Contemplative Prayer/Meditation,
France Room

WEDNESDAY, August 14

7 p.m. Child Care Council, CR Room

SATURDAY, August 17

1-4 p.m. Tai Chi, Gym

SUNDAY, August 18

9:30 a.m. Worship, Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY, August 21

2-5 p.m. Com on Prep for Ministry, Library
6:15-7:45 p.m. Alzheimer's Caregivers' Support Group, France Room
7 p.m. Poetry and the Christian Life, Library
7 p.m. Envision Board, Conf Room

SUNDAY, August 25

9:30 a.m. Worship, Fellowship Hall
10:45 a.m. Peace and Justice Com, France Room

MONDAY, August 26

6 p.m. Contemplative Prayer/Meditation, France Room

WEDNESDAY, August 28

7 p.m. Deacons, Library

Next *Messenger*

Deadline August 15, 2019

Send your content for inclusion to the *Messenger* to Communications Consultant and Messenger Editor Lisa Roca at lroca@catonsvillepres.org.



THE *Messenger*

OUR MISSION

We seek to find and share God's calling for this community of faith through worship, fellowship and service.

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