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Welcome, Michael!

By Kenneth E. Kovacs

We welcome to the staff, Rev. Michael Cuppett, our new Communication and Operations Manager.

Yes, you read this correctly. Michael is a recently ordained Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and member of the Presbytery of Baltimore, who sees communication as ministry.

A graduate of Belmont University and Princeton Theological Seminary, Michael comes to us with considerable experience working with more than half a dozen churches, individuals, and faith-based organizations over the past two years to streamline and strengthen their communications and operations. He has experience building and maintaining websites and is conversant in the world of social media. Michael's theological training enables him to bring spiritual and missional reflection into the work of communications and the operations of the church. He has experience as a church administrator and, in his first interview with us, offered a beautiful theological reflection on what happens in the day-to-day running of a church office.

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A Note From Wendy Johnston:

Read about Wendy's journey and an experience when "singing transformed into worship." *See page 3.*

Ash Wednesday and Creation Care:

Mark your calendar for the beginning of Lent and transition into the spring season. *See page 5.*

Highlights From the Session:

Read about personnel transitions, attendance numbers, and the church's year-end financial report. *See page 4.*

Youth Service Opportunities and

Lock In: Sign up for the Souper Bowl of Caring luncheon and get excited about the return of the Lock In! *See page 7.*

Michael recently served as the Operations Manager for Evolving Faith (evolvingfaith.com), an organization that is committed to building community and hope in “the wilderness” through its annual conference, podcasting, live streaming, and digital platform. Working with Evolving Faith, Michael constructed a visual identity and brand from the ground up before managing the creation of an online community space which hosts nearly 9,000 members.

At Princeton Seminary, he served on the staff of the Office of Digital Learning, developing the Seminary’s online learning capacity and leveraging technology to heighten student success. Michael helped faculty and students implement technology in their fields through personal training sessions and developed an online resource for congregations committed to the inclusion of LGBTQ+ Christians.

Catonsville Presbyterian Church has the opportunity to be cutting-edge, envisioning the future ministry of the church, and moving beyond the way it’s always been done.

Rev. Melissa Martin

One of his references, Rev. Melissa Martin, pastor of the Hopewell Presbyterian Church in Hopewell, NJ, shared with us that because Michael sees communication as ministry, he thinks visually and theologically about images and words, about how and what is conveyed to the congregation, and how to link this with the mission of the church. Commenting on the uniqueness of the CPC position, which combines communications and the administration of the church office, Melissa said, “CPC has the opportunity to be cutting-edge, envisioning the future ministry of the church, and moving beyond the way it’s always been done. I commend you for it. I wish I had someone like Michael to help us this way at Hopewell.”

Away from work, you will find Michael playing piano, exploring Baltimore, and enjoying a round of trivia with friends.

Michael is working with the Presbytery’s Committee on Ministry to ensure that his position at CPC will be considered a Validated Ministry (which is required for pastors who are not installed in congregational ministry). Michael’s ministry and responsibilities will be concentrated in the area of communications and managing the office. He will not have any other pastoral responsibilities as part of his job, although I’m sure you’ll see him in worship or the pulpit now and again.

Michael started working with us on January 3, 2023. The position is full-time, however, the office hours will remain, for now, Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. You may reach him at the church during office hours or via email, mcuppett@catonsvillepres.org.

Many thanks to the Personnel Committee for another excellent job well done. It’s been a busy year. We are grateful for their dedicated and faithful work. Thanks to Jeff Bolognese, Keith Glennan, Dottie Marshall, and Cynthia Schwanz (chair).

Welcome, Michael!

A Note From Wendy Johnston

Wendy Johnston is the Organist and Assistant Director of Music at Catonsville Presbyterian Church. She is a graduate of the Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University and has directed children's singing groups, worked with adult choirs, and taught numerous piano students in her private studio.

First, a huge thank you and round of applause for our children who sang in the family service on Christmas Eve. They sang beautifully and added to the joy of the worship service. Thank you to Owen and Deacon Flis, Clara and Zinnia Hall, Ryan Long, and Julian Wyatt. Thank you to their parents as well—who played an enormous role in the success of our fledgling children's choir—and to Paige Percy who made it extra special by singing a descant with the children. We can look forward to another appearance of the children's choir in the coming months.

I thought I might share a little about me and my journey to this congregation and in becoming the Organist and Assistant Director of Music at CPC. Several years ago, I attended a recital given in honor of my organ teacher at the time, Dale Krider, who was retiring. The guest organist gave a splendid recital and at the conclusion of the performance, he played the hymn *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*. The congregation stood shoulder to shoulder and sang with full voice while the virtuoso organist played not merely the music, but also the text. As each verse grew in grandeur,

the text and the music melded to become one entity. There is no other way to describe it. The singing transformed into worship. Despite the fabulous music that was played earlier during the recital, no one could stop talking about the hymn and the shared experience we had at the end.

For me, it was a pivotal experience. I suddenly saw how an organist could facilitate true worship, and I wanted to provide that experience for others. This experience was a catalyst in my subsequent decision to return to school for undergraduate and graduate degrees in organ performance. I hope that in my work at Catonsville Presbyterian that I can provide meaningful worship experiences for you.

As a side note, the guest organist who played that recital that day was Dr. John Walker. At the time, I had no idea several years later, Dr. Walker would be my beloved teacher at the Peabody Institute. Today, he is my mentor and friend.

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MAR

Exploring Membership Class

Have you been attending services at CPC and grown interested in learning more about the ministries here? Are you seeking opportunities to study scripture and enrich your faith? Are you searching for belonging and friendship? Perhaps you have questions about the CPC community, and you don't know who to ask.

We invite you to ask your questions at our Exploring Membership class. We will be hosting a meeting from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the France Room (located by the Frederick Door entrance) on March 25. Feel free to email Debbie Davis at ddavis1069@yahoo.com if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you!

Highlights From the January Session Meeting

By David Hutton, Clerk of Session

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 from the Session meeting on January 11, 2023.

The pastors noted that worship attendance at the Christmas Eve services increased versus previous years, and attendance for communion on January 8 was over 100. We were also pleased to see that a number of people from the community attended the Cocoa and Carols event the week before Christmas.

The Christian Education Committee will sponsor a Souper Bowl of Caring luncheon on Superbowl Sunday, February 12, 2023, with church youth assisting in preparing and serving the meal. Donations will benefit the monthly food ministry of Westside Men's Shelter.

The Personnel Committee reported on a smooth transition in the church office, as the new Communications and Operations Manager Michael Cuppett has settled in. Positive exit interviews were held with Office Administrator Regine Bonhomme and Communications Consultant Lisa Roca. We wish Regine and Lisa well in their future endeavors.

The Finance Committee presented the year-end financial report for 2022, which ended with a surplus of \$7,711. A balanced budget of \$833,305 was presented for 2023, which also recommended a 4.5% COLA for all staff members as encouraged by Baltimore Presbytery. Session voted to approve the budget as presented, with the pastors' Terms of Call to be approved by the congregation at the Annual Meeting on January 22, 2023.

Session voted to re-elect Hemi Lee-Gallager as church Treasurer for the coming year. Session also voted to elect David Hutton as Clerk of Session for the coming year.

Scout Sunday will be held on February 12, 2023, and the Scouts will assist in serving the Souper Bowl of Caring luncheon.

Session will hold a planning retreat at the church on a date in March to be determined by a poll of the Session members.



Next session meeting

The Session recognizes the need to continually communicate with the congregation, and we welcome your suggestions for facilitating dialogue. The contact information for Session members is listed in the church directory and on the website, so it is easy to communicate directly with us. 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!

Presbyterian Women Forming New Circle

By Laurie White

Whether you're single or married, young or old(ish), a parent or unencumbered, binary or non-binary, long-term member or guest, Presbyterian Women invites you to join a circle. Don't worry if your house is big enough, you don't drive at night, or you're juggling multiple priorities. There's a place for you! Join us in the France Room on February 26th following worship, when we will explore options for a new circle. If you cannot attend but are interested, please contact Laurie White at thewhites@brickhouse112.com or (410) 747-0317 (home). Presbyterian Women offers much more than a Bible study... it offers friendship, support and yes, even a laugh. Join us!

Creation Care News

By Ron Gunderson

Even in the midst of winter, our thoughts wander to Spring, the excitement of returning plants, and the joy of gardening!

This is the time to research and plan for next season. The Maryland DNR has a wonderful resource available at tinyurl.com/native-chesapeake to assist in planning.

Over the past seven seasons, the Creation Care Team has worked to create and develop the church's gardens into gardens primarily consisting of native plants. Additionally, we have reclaimed and restored the woodland area by creating specific habitats for native meadow grasses and flowering native plants and shrubs.

We continue to plant a variety of native trees, both canopy and understory. So far, we have added over 150 trees to the church grounds.

In the coming season, we will continue to partner with several community groups and contractors to further develop these areas of the church grounds, enhance their educational value, increase their use for recreation, and to provide special places for quiet and mediation.

Your help is needed!

If you are interested in helping with the church's beautiful outdoor spaces please email me at cinron.md@gmail.com

Scouts Sunday

By Glenda K. Johnson

Scout Sunday, an annual event, will be celebrated on February 12. Scout Troup 306 has been chartered by Catonsville Presbyterian Church since its founding in 1911 by Rev. John Nesbitt, minister from 1905-1937. Through his efforts Troop 1 (now 306) was the first Troop in the area. The current Cub Scout Pack, chartered in 2013, is a large, active group of younger Scouts.

Jeff Scharf and Eric Silva—Scoutmaster and Cubmaster, respectively—lead a team of trained, dedicated volunteers who provide a quality program for all Scouts. Scouting provides activities for youth to learn about the outdoors, the environment, and camping. Besides providing fun and fellowship, it emphasizes self-reliance, honesty, respect, and community service. Troop and Pack members are actively involved in many such activities.

All are invited to learn more about our Scout groups by attending Scout Sunday or contacting me.

Ash Wednesday

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Genesis 3:19

We begin the season of Lent and our journey to Easter with worship on Ash Wednesday. CPC will gather with the congregations of Dickey Memorial, Hope, and Hunting Ridge. This year, Dickey Memorial will host the service. We will gather at 7 p.m. for both Communion and the imposition of ashes. DMPC is located at 5112 Wetheredsville Road, Baltimore, MD, 21207, just five miles from CPC.

Souper Bowl of Caring Luncheon Returns!

By Dorothy Boulton

CPC youth are delighted to invite you to a delicious lunch of soup and sandwiches in fellowship hall right after worship on Sunday, February 12. Donations fund CPC's monthly food ministry at the Westside Men's Shelter in Catonsville. Since this is also Scout Sunday, we are grateful for our Scouts who are providing desserts. We're looking forward to gathering together to share a meal for a good cause.

Artists4ERA

In 1987, Congress declared March as National Women’s History Month. As a way to acknowledge the contributions of women and recognize the 100-year struggle to ensure equality for all, five organizations are teaming up, including Catonsville Presbyterian Church.

On March 3, AAUW Maryland, the Maryland Women’s Heritage Center, Dismantling Racism Committee of Catonsville Presbyterian Church, Grace AME Church, and Christian Temple are hosting Artists4ERA, an art exhibit developed to bring a renewed awareness to the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The exhibit will include the work of iconic artist Shepard Fairey, known by many for his Women’s March collection and his viral depiction of Barack Obama. The artwork depicts diverse groups and communities in their struggle to enshrine equal rights in the Constitution, including LGBTQIA+ people, Black women, women of color, Indigenous peoples, and young people.

“As gender rights are rolled back across the country and as the Supreme Court signals its willingness to forgo precedent, a new generation

of activists is stepping up to the fight. Art as a form of expression has a unique way of motivating people and we are deeply grateful to all the artists who contributed to this project,” said Kati Hornung, Executive Director of VoteEquality.

Tickets for the exhibit reception are free and can be reserved through Eventbrite. The reception will be hosted by the Baltimore County Arts Guild at the Catonsville Clubhouse on March 3 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.. The purchase of limited edition, signed prints will financially support VoteEquality, an organization working to ensure that the fully-ratified Equal Rights Amendment is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution.

Poster Art Exhibit

February 27 through March 5

Catonsville Clubhouse

Weekdays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Weekends from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Exhibit Reception

March 3 • 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Catonsville Clubhouse



Get reception tickets (free)

The 2017 Souper Bowl of Caring luncheon



Youth Corner

By Jennifer Hutton

As we head into this new year, there are several ways our youth are invited to minister. The Souperbowl of Caring will be held immediately after worship on February 12. A hot lunch of chicken soup and grilled cheese will be served, and donations collected will go to the Westside Men's Shelter food ministry. We are looking for middle and high school volunteers for February 11 and 12. Email jenhutton2010@gmail.com to sign up.

Upcoming Dates

Youth group for February will be held on February 26th from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in fellowship hall.

On March 26th, all youth of all ages and families are invited to an **Easter walk through the Woodlands** immediately following worship.

The return of the lock in! You've asked for it and it's finally back – we're hosting a middle and senior high youth lock in on Friday, March 17. Mark and Debbie Davis will host the overnight event. Please RSVP to Mark (msdav2@gmail.com) or Debbie (ddavis1069@yahoo.com). The event will start on Friday evening and end right after breakfast on Saturday morning. It's on St Patrick's Day – perhaps we'll have a green theme!

Freshmen Features



Olivia Virago attends Catonsville High School. At CHS, Olivia is part of the cross country and track teams and is active in Stage Crew. She also plays cello in the concert orchestra. Outside of school, Olivia is an advanced brown belt in Seido karate and likes to spend time with her friends. She enjoys engineering projects and computer design and hopes to pursue engineering in the future.



Jessica Johns attends Mount de Sales High School. She plays soccer and lacrosse and also enjoyed a vacation over the holiday in Puerto Rico.



Annika Nilsen attends Glenelg Country School. She's enjoying Latin and Engineering classes, and is doing set design in her Stagecraft class. She made the Varsity volleyball team as a freshman, and at the end of the season the team made it to the Championship game and won their conference. Annika is in her 10th year of dancing, and performed parts of the Nutcracker with the Columbia Orchestra at Christmas. She's looking forward to getting her lifeguard certification this spring.

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FEB

Family Ministries

By Dorothy Boulton

Our next Second Sunday is February 8th! Childcare is provided for infants to age five from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Owls Room. Multiage church school for kindergarten through fifth grade meets in the Giraffes Room following the Children's Message until the end of worship. Starting at 9:00 a.m., middle and high school youth will be preparing for the Souper Bowl of Caring.

Our Financial Resources Doing God's Work

By Keith Glennan

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!

Actual Income \$ 54,479
as of 01/21/23

Actual Expense \$ -21,581
As of 01/21/23

Total \$ 32,898

Adult Education

Join us in the library at 9:00 a.m. on Sundays for adult education.

February 5: Mission Update with Jennifer Bentzel

We welcome back Jennifer Bentzel, Foundations and Partner Relations Manager with Corus International/IMA World Health. Jennifer will talk about the merger of IMA and Lutheran World Relief and their new integrated programming. She will also provide a presentation and update on the Yemen Mobile Health Clinics project, which received a \$42,000 Envision grant in 2022. This project is providing critical primary health care services to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who were forced from their homes due to the ongoing conflict in Yemen and are now living in camps in Marib. Yemen continues to suffer through one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, due to widespread hunger, disease, and attacks on civilians. And Jennifer will provide an update on how CPC's mission giving continues to have a positive impact, particularly in Nepal and Tanzania.

February 19: Mission Update with Bonnie Harry, RN

We welcome back Bonnie Harry, RN, Director of Catonsville Emergency Assistance (CEA). It's been a busy and challenging year for CEA, with new challenges, as well as exciting new possibilities, on the horizon in 2023. Bonnie will offer an overview of the many ways CEA has provided a ministry of compassion and care in the Catonsville community. She'll share how a recent Envision Grant allowed CEA to purchase a van that has substantially expanded its capacity to provide food for those with transportation challenges. CPC's faithful and generous support of CEA is making a positive difference in the community. We are grateful to be partners in ministry.

THE
Messenger

Catonsville Presbyterian Church

1400 Frederick Road • Catonsville, MD 21228

Church Office

Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

(410) 747-6180 • catonsvillepres.org

