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Beloved Is Where We Begin

By *Kenneth E. Kovacs*

In worship on the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, we heard Matthew's account of Jesus's transfiguration, when Peter, James, and John were overshadowed by a bright cloud and heard a voice saying, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him" (Mt. 17:5). These words echo what Jesus heard at his baptism—an identity that was tested in the wilderness and throughout his life and ministry. They are words that foreshadow the cross and his resurrection as the beloved Son of God. *Beloved*. This is who Jesus is. And this is what we discover in and through him: that we, too, are the beloved of God.

As we move through the season of Lent, may we (re)discover our belovedness. And, so, you will find a blessing for your journey by Jan Richardson on the next page. It's from her beautiful book *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Season* (Wanton Gospeller Press, 2015).

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Youth Corner:

Get excited for the Easter Story Walk and upcoming Lock In. *See page 3.*

Iftar Dinner: Reserve your spot at a celebration of Ramadan with our Muslim siblings in Maryland. *See page 6.*

Highlights From the Session:

Read about the upcoming congregational meeting and other business. *See page 5.*

Scout Sunday Continues: Eric Silva, the Cubmaster of Pack 306, shares about significant transitions and happenings of Scouts at CPC. *See page 7.*

Beloved Is Where We Begin

Jan Richardson

If you would enter
into the wilderness,
do not begin
without a blessing.

Do not leave
without hearing
who you are:
Beloved,
named by the One
who has traveled this path
before you.

Do not go
without letting it echo
in your ears,
and if you find
it is hard
to let it into your heart,
do not despair.
That is what
this journey is for.

I cannot promise
this blessing will free you
from danger,
from fear,
from hunger
or thirst,
from the scorching
of sun
or the fall
of the night.

But I can tell you
that on this path
there will be help.

I can tell you
that on this way
there will be rest.

I can tell you
that you will know
the strange graces
that come to our aid
only on a road
such as this,
that fly to meet us
bearing comfort
and strength,
that come alongside us
for no other cause
than to lean themselves
toward our ear
and with their
curious insistence
whisper our name:
Beloved.
Beloved.
Beloved.

Youth Corner

Get to Know Our Youth

In the effort to reconnect post-Covid, we are featuring youth in every newsletter. This month we highlight the eighth graders.



Finley Dugan

Finley Dugan attends Catonsville Middle. They enjoy customizing their clothing, playing Ark, and exploring the world of *Dungeons & Dragons*. Fin is highly anticipating high school, where they hope new adventures with people who appreciate their *joie de vivre* will bring spice to their life.



Henry Awe Symms

Henry Awe Symms attends Bonnie Branch Middle School. He loves and has played violin since 3rd grade. He enjoys rock climbing with his team and creating 3D animation in Blender. Henry will be starring in a production of *SpongeBob: The Musical* this spring and heading to Space Camp this summer!



Upcoming

On March 26, the Christian Education team will host an Easter Story Walk in the church woodlands. Immediately following worship, youth volunteers will read the story of Jesus at different stations through the church woodlands followed by a fun activity in the pavilion. The entire congregation is invited!

In April, our youth group meeting will be postponed to April 16, as the Second Sunday, April 9, is Easter. Meet in the Fellowship Hall from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 pm.

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Youth Lock In

An invitation from Mark and Debbie Davis

“Wherever you go, whatever you do, may the luck of the Irish be there with you!” That’s our motto for the 2023 middle- and high-school lock in. Let the games begin and the luck of the Irish be with you!

All middle school and high school youth are invited for a fun-filled overnight lock in on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17-18 from 6:30PM to 9:00 a.m. A nutritious dinner of pizza and soda will be served. Kids can expect games, conversation, games, a late night movie, and games. Did we mention games?!

A continental breakfast of cold pizza, bananas, fruit bars, and OJ will be offered in the morning.

Kids who do not wish to spend the night are welcome. Please arrange for a departure at 10:30 p.m.

An evite invitation will be sent in early March. You can also RSVP by email to Mark and Debbie Davis at ddavis1069@yahoo.com.



Souper Bowl of Caring

Along with our Scouts on February 12, our middle and high school youth served the Souperbowl of Caring luncheon to a crowd of almost 100 people and raised \$1,300! We are so proud of the excellent job they did for this meaningful ministry to fund the Westside Men's Shelter.

Family Ministries

By Dorothy Boulton

Our next Second Sunday is March 12th! 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. Middle school and high school youth have Cocoa and Conversations in the upstairs youth room from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 am. Youth group will not be meeting that night due to the upcoming lock in.

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 February 1, 2023.

The Dismantling Racism Committee requested permission for CPC to host a dinner to celebrate Iftar (Ramadan) with the MARTI organization (Maryland Turkish-American Inhabitants) on March 25, 2023 in Fellowship Hall. MARTI will provide the food and CPC will provide beverages, table settings, etc. Session voted to approve the request.

The Finance Committee reported that for the year to date as of January 31, 2023, the Operating Budget shows a significant surplus of income versus expenses as some members pay their annual pledge all at once, while expenses have not yet been incurred. The Committee also reported that a minor discrepancy in the pastors' benefits was discovered and will require a revision to the pastors' Terms of Call, which have already been approved by the congregation. The Terms of Call will be updated to correct the discrepancy and submitted to the Session at its March meeting, so they can be voted on by the congregation at its called congregational meeting on March 26, 2023.

Session voted to call a congregational meeting on March 26, 2023 following worship for the purpose of electing church officers. The Nominating Committee will provide forms for nominations in upcoming worship bulletins.

Session members discussed the chapter on The Mission of the Church from Carlos Wilton's book, "Principles of Presbyterian Polity."

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!

Lenten Devotionals Available

Daily devotionals from the *Presbyterian Outlook* are available for this Lenten season. In *Examen: Outward Work for Inward Living*, Teri McDowell Ott explores the ancient spiritual practice of examen that focuses on honest assessment and reflection. With a different theme for each week of Lent, readers are invited to explore the connection between internal contemplation and outward action. Copies are available at the front and back of the Sanctuary as well as the church office. Visit tinyurl.com/examen-23 to download a copy.

Finding Support in Stephen Ministries

By Connie Renner

This time of the year can often compound any trouble that we may also be dealing with. Dealing with illness, depression, worry about family members, adjusting to aging, fears, can all pile up and overwhelm you. It is not easy to do, but reach out for help. One of those places is the Stephen Ministry at our church. A trained Stephen Minister will meet with a person in need on a weekly basis and walk with them through their personal troubles. Call or email the church office for more information: (410) 747-6180 or office@catonsvillepres.org.

Earth Care News

By Ron Gunderson

The CPC Creation Care Team is ready for our seventh season of projects as we create and manage the gardens, meadows, and woodlands that comprise the church's corner of creation.

As the weather improves in March, we will be enjoying informal gatherings to accomplish early-season gardening.

March Tasks:

- Clear over-wintering garden debris;
- Labyrinth and columbarium garden upkeep, re-mulching with wood chips;
- Reset tree protection as needed;
- Trim border grasses, driveway sidewalk garden, and church house gardens; and
- Hand-pull spring invasives (garlic mustard, wineberry, etc.).

As we move into April, the gardening becomes even more exciting! A work session is planned for the morning of Earth Day, Saturday, April 22nd, and another the following Saturday morning. Save the date - details to follow! All are welcome, no experience necessary.

Please contact me at cinron.md@gmail.com if you are available to help--in whatever way, for whatever amount of time!



Your Photos Are Needed!

By Michael Cuppett

You're invited to capture our life together with your photos (and even videos). During church events, concerts, and all the wonderful corners of our community, you're invited to snap a quick picture and pass it along. This is a great way to share with those in our community who are homebound or living apart from us at the moment, and to hold a mirror up to who we are and how we are living out our calling in God's world. Send your photos to office@catonsvillepres.org - there's no guarantee your photo will be used, but it's a joy to receive them no matter what.

Iftar Dinner

By Bill Henderson

Please plan to join us for dinner in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, March 25th at 6:45 p.m. A breaking of the fast meal (Iftar), celebrating Ramadan, will be provided by our Muslim friends from MARTI (Maryland Turkish American Inhabitants).

MARTI is, "a nonprofit and non-politically affiliated organization founded in 2003. MARTI strives to serve the local community's social, spiritual, cultural, and educational needs through various activities and programs and promote intercultural and interfaith dialogue & friendship. We believe that we can build stronger bridges within our community if we get to know one another."

All of the research, study and group discussions undertaken by our Dismantling Racism Committee indicates the most important thing any of us can do to improve human relations is exactly what MARTI states. It begins with getting to know one another.

Dinner will be served at sundown, preceded and followed by a shared program lead by MARTI and CPC. Ramadan begins on March 22nd and ends April 21st. This year, we will be preparing for and celebrating Easter with some overlap of Ramadan.

Reservations will be required as sponsor and host will each have 50 seats. Please register on Eventbrite at [tinyurl.com/iftar-23](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/iftar-23)

Come and learn about Ramadan, make new acquaintances or renew old acquaintances. We look forward to sharing this special celebration with our friends from MARTI as we continue to gather for dialogue and grow our friendship.

Scout Sunday Celebration Continues

By Eric Silva, Cubmaster, Pack #306

“What a year.” This is the theme for so many who have come out of the pandemic. A year ago on Scouts Sunday, I stood in a mask speaking to a mostly empty sanctuary, showing off my bald spot to an elevated camera and telling you about Pack #306. We had 32 scouts that day. But what a year! We have increased our attendance to fifty scouts every week, after this very full year: using the pavilion every Wednesday night, selling treats on the lawn over the winter, and using Fellowship Hall for an egg drop competition. And more scouts keep coming.

Another pack in Catonsville recently lost their charter through no fault of their own. And yet, through your dedication, support, and care that you show to Pack #306, we now support this other pack in our community. None of that would be possible without you. I look forward to coming back in a year to share another year of growth and prosperity from Pack #306. Thank you for making it happen!

The Souper Bowl of Caring luncheon included contributions of the Scouts!



ChiliFest Is Almost Here!

This annual event brings together congregations to enjoy excellent chili and a friendly cornhole tournament. ChiliFest also includes an in-person auction, door prizes, a 50/50 raffle and live music. Join the fun at First Presbyterian Church of Howard County on Sunday, March 19, 2023 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Chili tickets and cornhole registration is required in advance by visiting tinyurl.com/chilifest-2023.

Presbyterian Women Circle Forming

It's not too late to join a circle. If you're not sure what a Presbyterian Women circle is or just feel a little reluctant to join, please feel free to contact Laurie White at 410-747-0317 or thewhites@brickhouse112.com. All questions happily answered. We hope to have a new circle up and running soon. Circles meet just once a month for a couple of hours so it's a minimal time commitment and the return is one of fellowship, study, friendship and fun. Please consider joining!

Adult Education

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

March 5: Ukraine Support with Susan Krehbiel

When Russia invaded Ukraine almost a year ago, the Presbyterian Church (USA) wasted no time in reaching out to our international sibling churches and colleagues to see how we could help. Susan Krehbiel—a ruling elder and member at Catonsville Presbyterian—coordinates a cross-ministry response team that provides financial support for this humanitarian assistance. As the Associate for Migration Accompaniment Ministries for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA), Susan will share about our national and international partners who are providing assistance to Ukrainians displaced internally and who live as refugees in neighboring countries. She will also share what she saw and learned during a recent visit to Hungary, Czech Republic, Ukraine, and Poland and how this informs her work and ministry. In the years to come—during this war and afterwards—Presbyterian Disaster Assistance will be supporting Ukrainians as they seek safety, wholeness, and when the time comes, a rebuilt homeland.

March 19: Pathos, Empathy, and the Cross with Ken Kovacs

Isaiah spoke of a “suffering servant” (Is. 53) by whose “bruises we are healed.” Jesus, talking about himself, said, “the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mk. 8:31). The suffering that Jesus endured, the early Church believed, brought about something new. The first Christians believed that they could share in Christ’s suffering and, therefore, found meaning in their individual and collective experiences of suffering. What do these beliefs mean for us today? Do they still resonate with us and carry the same meaning? How do we relate to Christ’s suffering on the cross? Did he have to suffer? And what exactly did he suffer?

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	\$125,505
as of 02/25/23	
Actual Expense	\$ -92,821
As of 02/25/23	
Total	\$ 32,684
Per Capita Contributions	\$ 1,050



THE
Messenger

Catonsville Presbyterian Church

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Church Office

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

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