

Dear Friends in Christ at CCPC,

What a joy it was to worship with you last Sunday!! This was my first experience using Facebook Live. The ability to interact and "chat" with one another as we worshiped was wonderfully uplifting! The spirit is certainly at work through technology these days.

Here are some of the things I have done in my first few days as your new transitional pastor:

- ◆ Met with the staff (what a great group of ministry pros!)
- ◆ Toured the church building
- ◆ Prayed in the glorious sanctuary
- ◆ Called all of the deacons and elders to introduce myself
- ◆ Called to check in on a few members
- ◆ Helped Justin lead a vibrant Bible study
- ◆ Enjoyed learning about those of you who submitted your answers to the Children's Sermon questions. An extremely eclectic pizza potluck may be in our future!

In the days ahead I will continue making calls to get to know the members -- please do let me know if you or another member are in need of a call from me. I am eager to be present not only to get to know people, but also to provide pastoral care. It is a rich part of my calling. In the next week or so, I will also be meeting with the Session, the Personnel and Worship Teams, and the Reopening Task Force.

I am so blessed to be able to do the work that God has laid in front of us. Having preached this past Sunday on a passage from the Apostle Paul, I have been thinking about a particular section from our "Brief Statement of Faith." Our denomination (PC-USA) adopted this statement as one of our confessions in 1983. To me, this section of it speaks to our ways of drawing closer to God by leaning into our past traditions, by strengthening our faith in the present, and by planning for our faith in the future. It is a powerful message for CCPC during this time of dynamic transition. Enjoy these inspired words:

"The same Spirit
who inspired the prophets and apostles
rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture,
engages us through the Word proclaimed,
claims us in the waters of baptism,
feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.
In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage

to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth,
praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Peace,
Pastor Susan



Devine Farewell Celebrations!

We are making plans to celebrate Justin and his family before they head west to their next chapter in Oregon. Justin and Mikaela have contributed so much to our church community and we are sad to see them and their precious daughters go. At the same time, we wish them well in this exciting new adventure.

Because we all have differing levels of comfort with social distance during Covid, we are providing options so everyone can feel safe.

Here are the current plans:

On Sunday, September 20 from noon to 1:00pm, we will have a rolling drive-by farewell at Justin's house ([2503 Kegwood Lane, Bowie](#)) for those who are not comfortable getting out of their cars. Feel free to make signs, decorate your car, or wave. Out of courtesy to the neighbors, we will not do this parade-style, and keep the honking to a minimum. If there is not a crowd when you drive by, you can even roll down your window and share your well wishes.

From 1 pm to 4 pm we will have 15 minute slots where people can [sign up](#) to come over to Justin's and visit briefly in the backyard to express their farewells. We will have a canopy set up for visitors to identify social distance. We will also be collecting money for gifts for the family through [CCPC's website](#). Just click the donation button, add your amount, and be sure to put Devine in the Other category.

Thank You & God Speed

That first Sunday he stood -- clean-shaven -- in front of the church that had just hired him, ready to introduce himself. He started out by explaining that he usually had a beard, but then he had started to trim it and it had gotten out of hand and he ended up shaving it off as a last resort. He was both endearing and vulnerable in that first moment. Justin Devine and his wife Mikaela came to CCPC in January 2015. He was hired as the Director of Christian Education, then he became the Director of Spiritual Development, but for most of his time here many of us referred to him as the "youth pastor." Justin arrived with a wife about to give birth to their first child, with a ton of enthusiasm, and with new ideas.

The youth group had sparse and inconsistent attendance when he arrived. Justin challenged youth to bring their friends to youth group on Sunday nights and many of them did, growing the number of youth who were in the CCPC extended family. But Justin did not just interact with these kids on Sunday, he became an involved and a reliable presence in their lives. He went to baseball games, lacrosse games, swim meets, softball games, band concerts, and recitals. He would learn the names of friends and teammates, immersing himself in the ecosystems of CCPC teens. He provided tutoring sessions and helped kids study for tests. He became a trusted adult, both to the teens and to their parents.

In the fall of his first year at CCPC, Justin put out a schedule of events for the next year that included a trip to Mexico to build houses with Amor. Many parents were not thrilled with the idea of their young teens going to another country without their parents, but Justin made the case, generated enthusiasm, created events to raise funds, and took a group of about 25 on a trip that included some very hard work and life-changing experiences. Another group would go back in 2018; some of them were older and more proficient, while others were along for the first time. It was a huge disappointment that the 2020 trip — when CCPC youth group had ten graduating seniors -- had to be canceled because of COVID.

During the alternate summers when the youth group did not go to Mexico, they went to Montreat which has long been a CCPC tradition. Justin also made sure that the youth were involved in other aspects of the life of the church whether it was participating in worship through reading or singing, making a meal for warm nights, special plays that involved the children and youth, or volunteering for Christmas families. Justin and Mikaela hosted Christmas parties at their house, had the kids over to watch sporting events and he was always available for them to talk as they navigated the turbulent waters of adolescence and young adulthood. Their home was always open.

I could go on at length about Justin's impact on the youth, but his footprint at CCPC is much bigger than that. He was involved in the start up of CCPC's contemporary worship service and helping it become a success, he managed VBS each summer, he led Straight from the Source bible study, he started a youth bible study, he served as tech support for anything technology related in the sanctuary, he worked on house builds in West Virginia and Tennessee, and he filled in at the pulpit several times each year. When James went on leave earlier this year, Justin filled in while he was away.

When COVID hit, Justin was one of those involved in figuring out how to help us all worship remotely. When James was diagnosed with a brain tumor Justin was named Head of Staff and tasked with coordinating worship...during a pandemic...something no one was prepared for. Over the past six months, Justin has been the glue that has held CCPC together. He has organized worship, preached several of those Sundays, brought many voices into our online services, given us the gift of Ainsley welcoming us to the weekly online service, recommended to Session that we create a Race & Diversity Task Force, and created online forums like the Thursday Church Check In to make sure that we see one another and remain a cohesive congregation.

Mikaela arrived with him in 2015, traveling across the country to give birth in a new place where she didn't know anyone. She was his partner in every aspect of his ministry. She often accompanied Justin to the youth's softball/baseball/lacrosse/etc. games. She would build mountains for VBS, sing in the choir and at the contemporary service, put up with youth at her house at all hours, and help coordinate Christmas Families. She did all this while working her day job and raising three precious daughters.

As the Devine family heads to Oregon and the next exciting chapter in their story, we are filled with gratitude for their contributions to CCPC over the past five years. Justin, we appreciate all you did with us and for us during that time. We will miss your enthusiasm and energy and positivity. We rejoice at how your ministry at CCPC has touched our lives, and we thank you.

Written by Jane Mellow, but from all of your CCPC family and friends — Keep in touch & Godspeed!

Mearl H. Kemberling

July 17, 1942 – July 31, 2020



Mearl H. Kemberling of Stevensville, Maryland died in his home on Friday, July 31, 2020. He was 78. Born in Everett, PA on July 17, 1942, he was the son of John H. and Bertha Margaret Adams Kemberling. He graduated from Everett High, valedictorian and went to Penn State, specialized in geology and ceramics and served in the Army ROTC. He was stationed in Germany as a Munitions Officer. He went to CA and worked for a computer company and ceramics company before settling into a decade's long career in mortgages including certification to do real estate appraisals. Living on a small ranch in Windsor, CA, he raised cows, donkeys, chickens, had a sheep dog named Katie, and a pig named Cradle Anne. Katie herded the chickens so much they fell over in exhaustion! Meanwhile his friends from the West Coast remember the many parties he hosted at the ranch. Mearl loved to cook. This circle of friends, regardless of where they moved, has remained true friends for over 50 years!

He moved to Maryland in 1993 and met his wife, Diane, at a church dinner. She is active in Christian Community Presbyterian Church (CCPC) and he assisted her in church related activities, as she was a deacon. Mearl worked with Habitat for Humanity, sponsored by CCPC, and helped build a home in WV. He loved music, especially blue grass, and had a keen eye and ear for all kinds of fine instruments — donating several instruments to the CCPC's Music Program for children in need.

Prior to his retirement in 2019, he spent 20 years in telecommunications — securing, leasing, and writing contracts for tower sites in multiple states. He also worked on the Emergency Phone System in Washington, D.C.

Visitation was on Wednesday, August 12, 2020 at Fellows, Helfenbein & Newman Funeral Home.

Contributions may be made to CCPC or the charity of your choice.

Mearl's wishes were to have his ashes scattered in the Klamath River where he spent many happy times camping and fishing for steelhead with his west coast friends.

Mearl was very loved and will be greatly missed by his family and friends.



Congregational Meeting

Summary

CCPC held a congregational meeting on August 20. Highlights are below:

The Re-opening Task Force reported on the difficulties that CCPC faces in opening for worship and activities indoors and explained the reasons CCPC will currently remain closed. They include strict limits on room occupancy, airflow from HVAC moving particles about, and the need for purchasing sanitation stations to keep everyone safe, especially the staff. Although there is a desire to have worship outdoors, the task force decided not to attempt outdoor services. The parking lot is too small for many cars and extra personnel would be needed to setup and remove chairs and to keep all safe and at a distance if worshippers were outside their cars. Singing is currently not safe due to possible transmission of Covid.

Elder Evonne Tang was approved by the congregation as President of the Corporation; this allows her to conduct the church's financial business.

Sharon Youngdahl was approved & installed as an elder for class of 2023.

Session Meeting

Summary

The following are highlights from the August 10 Session meeting.

- ◆ Evonne Tang, Finance, reported that the PPP money has saved enough in the personnel account that some of the money can be applied to the purchase of broadcasting equipment. This will allow live broadcasts of CCPC worship services.
- ◆ Skip Oates, B&G, will arrange for parking stops to be removed and replaced by lower rubber or synthetic ones. The Dodds Hall lots will be resurfaced, restriped and re-marked.
- ◆ Ann Fleming, Outreach, announced another blood drive for Red Cross that will be held on September 25. She encouraged Session to attend the Courageous Conversations mini-retreat.
- ◆ Director of Spiritual Development Justin Devine announced his resignation, thanking everyone for supporting him as Head of Staff after Rev. Brassard's illness and retirement. He described his time here as a wonderful challenge, a blessing, and a great joy. Session thanked him for his dedicated service during a difficult time. His final day will be September 30.

This meeting was the final time that Rev. Cameron Byrd would serve as our Presbytery-appointed Moderator. He expressed his pleasure in assisting CCPC. Session thanked him for his steady hand in guiding their meetings and the remote ordinations and installations.

AAMC Blood Donor Center

CCPC Fall Blood Drive



LOCATION

Christian Community Presbyterian Church
3120 Belair Drive, Bowie, MD 20715

DATE

Friday, September 25th

TIME

9am - 2pm

We encourage you to start eating iron-rich foods one-week prior to donation.

To donate blood, you must be:

- Between 17 and 74 years old; 16 with parental consent
- In good health
- At least 110 lbs

You can give blood while taking most medications.

All donations benefit the Anne Arundel Medical Center.
One pint of blood can save up to three lives!

**TO OTHERS WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN DONATING BLOOD TO HELP OUR
COMMUNITY, PLEASE FORWARD THIS LINK:**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084caba92ea5fb6-christian2>)

Race & Diversity **Task Force**



Courageous Conversations

In August, CCPC's Race & Diversity Task Force had 31 members join our first ever digital retreat weekend: [Courageous Conversations on Race, Diversity, and Loving One Another](#). On Friday night, several of us joined the Netflix Watch Party to view the challenging documentary about mass incarceration, "[13th](#)." More joined on Zoom afterwards and we stayed up late discussing our reaction to the film. Thanks to Sara Huey & Justin for patiently teaching us new technologies and guiding us through a courageous conversation.

On Saturday morning we were joined by Rev. Molina-Moore from the National Capital Presbytery. He gave us an update on NCP efforts toward [Dismantling Racism](#).

Kevin Maxwell introduced our excellent facilitator, Carlesa Finney, his colleague in equity efforts in Anne Arundel schools. A special thanks to Kevin who knew we needed her skilled guidance. After sharing the history and context for our current concerns about racial injustice, we zoomed into smaller breakout groups to explore our feelings about all we had learned. In the afternoon, we brainstormed possible responses and actions our congregation might consider to shine the light of Christ on this darkness.

Moving Forward

The Task Force met last Saturday to debrief and to prioritize the list of suggestions. Watch for announcements about upcoming book discussions, movie watch parties, and a podcast club. We are also making plans to host a forum with our local representatives to hear about proposed legislation addressing criminal justice issues. Details coming soon.

Our next task force meeting is Saturday, September 19 at 10:00am. After that, we will continue our meetings on the first Saturday of each month via Zoom for the time being.

If you would like to be added to a group email to share agendas and ongoing conversations around the topic of racial justice, please email Dennis at Dennis@EvansOpticalEngineering.com. We appreciate new voices, new ideas, and new energy, even if you can't make all the meetings. We invite you to join our sessions to enlighten our minds, encourage our hearts, and embolden our feet as we step into the call of our Savior to seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

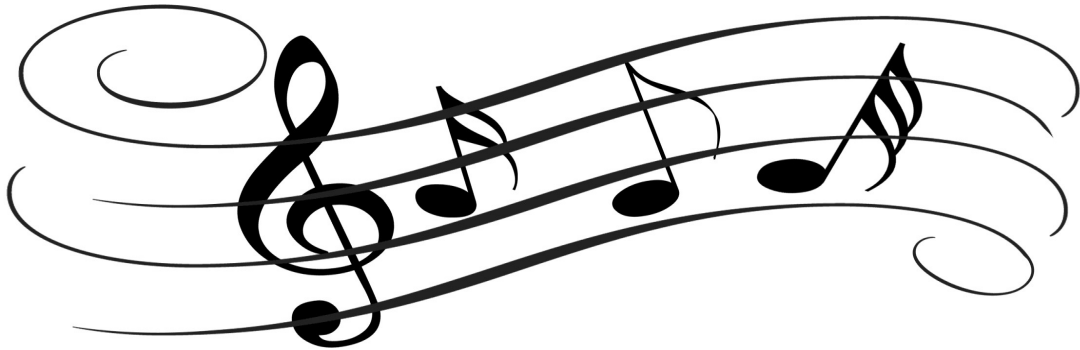
For more resources, [check out this growing list](#). If you would like to support our efforts through direct donations, **please donate** through [our website](#) choosing "other." Write *Race & Diversity Task Force* in the box. Thank you for supporting this retreat and building our funds for future such endeavors.

2020 Fall

Virtual Concert Series

**Sundays at 4:00 pm
LIVE ON FACEBOOK!**

ccpc.bowiemd.org/calendar--events/concert-series.html



(“New”) Sunday, October 4: Bruce Jonas, pianist

Mr. Jonas will present a program of jazz and blues compositions as well as improvisatory arrangements of works by some classical masters.

Sunday, November 1: “Rosa Parks: A Time”

Nationally acclaimed actress Ms. Briley-Strand returns to CCPC as Rosa Parks in her historic act of civil disobedience that changed the course of the American Civil Rights movement.

Sunday, December 6: Capital Ringers

This virtuoso ensemble performs on six octaves of handbells and hand chimes in a seasonal program that includes a light show.

To ensure the continuation of our concert series, please consider a donation marked “CCPC Concert Series Friend”, either mailed to the above address, or made online at ccpc.bowiemd.org via ‘DONATE’.

Thank you for your generous support!

For further information, please call 301-262-6008 or email ccpcmusic@verizon.net

Christian Community Presbyterian Church



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CCPC, the first Protestant church in Levitt Bowie, was born from a passion for Christian mission in the local community, and this focus continues.

Our Mission: To worship God, to grow in faith and community, and to place our gifts in the service of Jesus Christ.

Please remember CCPC in your will.



Belair Cooperative Nursery School

The school is a non-profit, non-sectarian, and non-partisan organization. It's located in the CE Building of Christian Community Presbyterian Church.

Call 301-464-5782 or Email info@belaircoop.org

www.belaircoop.org



Imagine - Yoga & Wellness Center



Located in the CE building, offers yoga and a variety of wellness programs to CCPC members and the community. For more information, visit

www.ImagineThePlace.com, call 443-510-6308, or e-mail info@ImagineThePlace.com. Scholarships available.

