

December 1, 2012



The Caller

It was great to have the Hanging of the Greens go so smoothly Sunday afternoon. Of course when things go smoothly, it reflects the amount of work and planning done in advance. Before we started, Lynn deSeve had the trees and the boxes of decorations already at their respective sites. Workers could grab a snack and join with a team of others to get their tree assembled and decorated. Volunteers were rewarded with a delicious selection of soups and breads. Cyd Radden-LeSage topped the events with a tray of homemade pumpkin squares. If only the rest of the Christmas activities would go so smoothly.

I read through the scripture readings for the four Sundays in Advent. The first Sunday (December 2nd) always starts with an apocalyptic text. Apocalyptic literature tends to be highly charged, utilizing rich metaphors and vivid symbolism. The writers are trying to warn the reader that dramatic change is coming. It is time to wake up and get right with God.

These days we don't need to be scared straight with highly charged language. I believe we are living in a time of rapid social change; evolutionary biologists refer to these periods as times of "punctuated equilibrium." There is uncertainty everywhere. There is economic turmoil worldwide. The Middle East is a tinder box. All that is on top of the struggles each of us have in our family and professional lives.

The apocalyptic readings are showing us where to look to find hope and confidence in unsteady times. Presbyterian seminary professor Walter Brueggemann writes that hope, real hope, is a matter of living "against the data." Followers of Jesus are

called to walk with God even when the odds for success are stacked against us. We are asked to live into an unimagined future. And the reason that future is unimagined is because most, if not all, of what has led us to "now" bears no resemblance to what we believe is coming. The Bible reminds us that so much of what we experience in this world is privation and violence. Yes, there are moments of oasis in the midst of barren wilderness; but the future that is coming is a feast for all people, nothing less than the redemption of the world. We gather Sunday after Sunday to remind ourselves that we are on our way to that future...even if we cannot see it, or the path to it, very clearly. We have not yet received what God has promised and sometimes the promise itself seems but wishful thinking. We walk by faith, not by sight.

Hope is trusting God in times when there is so much good we cannot yet see because we are being bombarded with so much bad news. But we see Christ, and if we can see and believe and *receive* Christ, we will find that we are already living *as if* the future is already in some ways here. And that future that God is bringing forward is a good one. Jesus Christ is coming to live among us, sharing with us God's grace and teaching us God's truth.

In the four Sundays in Advent, the sermons will offer practical advice of how live confidently in uncertain times. If you want a good book to give as a Christmas present I would recommend Anne Lamott's "Help, Thanks, Wow: The Three Essential Prayers." Only 102 pages but you will want to reread it again and again.

Grace and peace,

James Brassard

Worship Notes

December 2: (First Sunday in Advent - Communion at both services) Luke 21:25-36. The first Sunday in Advent always arrives with readings from the Apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic simply means "revelation." In Luke 21, Jesus uses ominous signs in nature and the news to suggest that God is drawing near to us at a time when others fear that God has deserted us. However, the vision God is revealing to us might not be what we expected. How can we discern the signs of the times?

December 9: (Second Sunday in Advent). John the Baptist delivers his fiery sermon along the banks of the Jordan River. He tells his audience: Do the things that show you have turned your life around. The people respond, "What are we to do?" We will discover the kind of qualities in our lives that prove we are on the right track.

December Sunday Calendar

† Sunday, December 2, 2012

8:30 AM Chapel Service with Communion -- Sanctuary
10:00 AM Worship -- Sanctuary
10:00 AM Sunday Morning Connect: Jr. and Sr High
11:00 AM Orchestra Practice -- Sanctuary
11:15 AM Adult Ed: Speaking Christian -- Conference Room
5:00 PM Youth Group -- Sr High Room
7:00 PM Prayer/Study Group -- Member's Home
7:15 PM Clinquant -- Belair Mansion

† Sunday, December 16, 2012

8:30 AM Chapel Service with Communion -- Sanctuary
10:00 AM Worship with Youth Orchestra and Christmas Pageant -- Sanctuary
11:15 AM Adult Ed: Speaking Christian -- Conference Room
5:00 PM Youth Group -- Sr High Room
7:00 PM Prayer Study -- Member's Home

† Sunday, December 9, 2012

8:30 AM Chapel Service with Communion -- Sanctuary
10:00 AM Worship -- Sanctuary
11:15 AM Adult Ed: Speaking Christian -- Conference Room
5:00 PM Youth Group -- Sr High Room
5:30 PM Imagine Children's Dance -- Dodds Hall
6:30 PM Discovery Circle -- Parlor

† Sunday, December 23, 2012

Music Sunday
8:30 AM Chapel Service with Communion -- Sanctuary
10:00 AM Worship -- Sanctuary
11:15 AM Adult Ed: Speaking Christian -- Conference Room
5:00 PM Youth Group -- Sr High Room

† Sunday, December 30, 2012

10:00 AM Worship -- Sanctuary
10:00 AM Sunday Morning Connect: Jr. and Sr High
5:00 PM Youth Group -- Sr High Room

Bowie Senior Chorale Presents **Our 2012 Winter Concert**

An Olde Tyme Holiday

On Friday, December 14 at 7:30 PM, the Bowie Senior Chorale will perform their 2012 winter concert at the Bowie Center for Performing Arts.

General Admission is \$6.00. Tickets are on sale now at the Bowie Senior Center located at 14900 Health Center Drive in Bowie. If you need more information, call (301) 809-2300.



The CCPC Celebration Choir will perform with the Chesapeake Chorale in

Gloria

Please join us on Sunday, December 9 at 3 PM at the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts (BCPA) and listen to our own CCPC Celebration Choir as they join forces with St. Matthew's UMC Choir and the Chesapeake Chorale in a performance of John Rutter's *GLORIA* with full brass and percussion.

Each choral group will also present selections for the Christmas season. Tickets are \$15/\$12 and can be obtained through choir members or at the BCPA door.

2012 *Christmas Gift Market* Results

CCPC members and friends contributed **\$11,570** to the Christmas Gift Market projects this year. The contributions were designated as follows:

Church World Service	\$795
Medical Benevolence Foundation	\$1229
Compassion International	\$241
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	\$2755
Bowie Interfaith Pantry	\$1311
Habitat for Humanity	\$815
Heifer International	\$1425
Bowie VFD	\$421
CCPC Honduras Mission	\$2092
Operation Christmas Child	\$331
Warm Nights	\$155

An undertaking such as the Alternative Christmas Gift Market is only possible because of all of you who gave of your time and effort to make it successful. Special thanks to all who helped in any way—the cashiers, the card makers and distributors, those who manned the displays, those who setup Dodds Hall, the soup makers, those who served the soup and cleaned up the kitchen, and the person who provided centerpieces for the tables. And thanks to all who contributed funds to these mission projects, which provide help and hope to those in need.





Christmas Families

Update

Thanks to everyone for your overwhelming support thus far!

We sponsored over 180 children in the first two weeks, but we still have over 100 children to go! Let me know if you are connected with a group that might want to sponsor some children. We have several groups involved already, but there's still room for more.

School supplies are donations have been given generously; we just need 75 more packs of wide-ruled lined notebook paper and we are complete. Drop off the paper in the labeled boxes in the church office.

We also need help defraying the cost of groceries. Your donation of \$50 will buy groceries for one family. If you're interested in helping in this way, please mark your regular weekly offering for Christmas Families or bring your check/cash to the Christmas Families table in the atrium on Sunday morning.

Volunteers are needed in all areas, so remember to check the sign-up board in the atrium.

We also need donations of wrapping paper, gift boxes, gift tags and gift bags.

While the deadline for bringing gifts to the church is Thursday, December 13, we **STRONGLY ENCOURAGE** early gift drop off. We have LOTS of gifts to check and wrap and getting a head start is very important. Sunday morning during church is the best time for early gift drop off. Bring your gift(s) in a plastic bag marked clearly with the child's ID number on the outside and on the inside of the bag, then place the gift bag in the LIBRARY. There will be a check list on the door of the Library – please check off your child's ID number and name. This is very important!

Important Dates to Remember

(NOTE: Light refreshments will be provided for all work days.)

Dec 1 – 13	EARLY GIFT DROP OFF (Include ID Number and Name on all packages)
Dec 12 (Wed)	9 – 10 pm Set up Dodds Hall for Gift Sorting & Wrapping
Dec 13 (Thu)	9 am – 5 pm SORT & CHECK GIFTS 12 pm – 5 pm GIFT WRAPPING (bring your own scissors, tape and pen) by 6 pm GIFTS DUE 6 – 9 pm SORT & CHECK GIFTS GIFT WRAPPING (bring your own scissors, tape and pen)
Dec 14 (Fri)	9 am – 3 pm SORT & CHECK GIFTS (continued) GIFT WRAPPING (bring your own scissors, tape and pen) 2:00 pm Pick up food order at Aldi (non-perishables) 4 – 10 pm GIFT WRAPPING (bring your own scissors, tape and pen)
Dec 15 (Sat)	9 am – 5 pm GIFT WRAPPING (bring your own scissors, tape and pen) 7 pm – 9 pm Re-Set Dodds Hall for Food Sorting
Dec 16 (Sun)	12 pm – 4 pm Food Sorting
Dec 17 (Mon)	7 am – 8 am Pick Up Food Order at Aldi's (perishables, inc. turkeys/chickens) 9 am – 1 pm Family Pick Up/Delivery (daytime session) 6 pm – 9 pm Family Pick Up/Delivery (evening session)

If you're interested in helping, but still not sure how you fit in, please see me on Sunday or give me a call at 240-731-0683 or email at roglojo@gmail.com. Thanks for your support of Christmas Families 2012!

Roxanne Johnson
Christmas Families Coordinator.

Thank You!

Dear Friends,

Once again all of you wonderful people have rallied round me after I fell on November 4th and broke the humerus in my right arm. Many of you have been so kind to drive me to doctors' visits, physical therapy, food, telephone calls and beautiful cards. I can't imagine a more caring and loving congregation anywhere. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart. Please keep me in your prayers as I heal from the surgery.

Fondly,

Barbara Stone

Contact Us

Office Hours

Monday through Friday 9:00 AM—3:00 PM

(301) 262-6008 ccpcbowie@verizon.net

Pastor	James Brassard ccpcpastor@verizon.net
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Music Director	Susan Ricci Rogel ricci-rogel@msn.com
Administrative Assistant	Robin Seekford ccpcbowie@verizon.net

Friendly Reminder of Date Change!

Please note the Ladies Holiday dinner has moved to Wednesday, January 16, 2013.

Dinner will be at 6 PM. Details coming soon.

Knits with Sticks

Many thanks for the donated scarves and hats for the parents of the Christmas families. The rest of the donations are due by Sunday, December 9. There is a box in the CCPC office to receive donations.

We will meet at 1 PM on the second Monday in December (12/10/2012) in the Conference room to package up all the donations.

Many Thanks,
Priscilla Bouic

Offering Envelopes

Question: Why do our church volunteers like offering envelopes?

Answer: Because it makes it easier and faster to count and categorize the offering each Sunday!

The 2013 offering envelopes will be in the atrium this Sunday. If you do not see your name on a box please leave your name on the signup sheet on the table. The offering envelopes are the church's way of keeping track of your giving so that we may send you a statement for your income tax preparation. Remember, by using the envelopes you are making the volunteer counters' and the financial secretary's jobs easier. Thank you!



If you no longer want *The Caller* delivered to your home and/or prefer to receive it online, please contact Robin at the church office. The next Caller will be sent out around December 15th. Please have all articles in by 9 AM on Tuesday, December 11th. If you need assistance, please feel free to call the office. Thank you!

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.*

Bowie Interfaith Pantry

Open for distribution and service 9 AM-11 AM on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
We are closed on holidays.

Located at: Christian Community Presbyterian Church
(in the Education Building at the rear of the parking lot)
3120 Belair Drive — Bowie MD 20715

Visit our website: www.bowiefoodpantry.org

E-mail us: BowieFoodPantry@gmail.com **Phone:** 301-262-6765

Thank you for your continued support!

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 Ann@ImagineThePlace.com. Scholarships available.

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

