



It is not often that the biggest story of the week is a religious story. However, when Pope Benedict XVI unexpectedly became the first Pope to resign the office since the 1400's, it became a huge international story. The announcement of course sparked immediate speculation. The media always thinks something sinister is at play. Was the former Cardinal Ratzinger leaving because of some nefarious reason? I took the Pope on his word. He is a man of 86 with failing health, who is honest enough to admit that he no longer has the physical strength needed to carry out the incredible demand of the Papacy. I wish him well. He deserves credit for finally lifting the veil on the sexual abuse scandal among Catholic clergy.

Garry Wills wrote in his New York Times column, *New Pope? I've Given Up Hope*, that people who hope for change in the Catholic church are always told to wait for a new pope. Wills says this is naive "For only he has the authority to make the changeless church change, but it is his authority that stands in the way of change."

Comedian Stephen Colbert, a devout and theologically sophisticated Catholic, said on his show that the church better hurry up and elect a successor. Since the Pope is infallible and his moral positions never change, a new infallible leader better arrive soon or "Catholics will start acting like Presbyterians."

In the hierarchical (Wills calls it monarchical) system of governance, when a Pope declares a position of moral belief to be an infallible, eternal truth, from that point on the position cannot be undone by his successors. Eternal truths, even on issues like birth control, are nonnegotiable.

In 1859, Cardinal John Henry Newman published an article titled, *On Consulting the Faithful in Matters of Doctrine*. Newman showed that in history, the laity had been more true to the Gospel than the church hierarchy. He was immediately denounced for the heresy of suggesting that dogma is better done from below. This is exactly what happened in the early church councils where bishops voted on the great doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Call me a morally wishy, washy Presbyterian if you must. However, I have the stubborn reformed belief that the Holy Spirit still speaks through the interpretation of the scriptures. The church should be reformed and always in the process of being reformed according to the word of God. The claim that Popes are the sole conduits of grace is a badly outdated remnant of times when absolute monarchs ruled the world. The Holy Scriptures were given by God to be the practical guide to faith and its practice. They are living documents through which the Holy Spirit continues to speak to us. It is unfortunate that Papal dictates from another time and place cannot be reexamined in light of the new demands of this world God created and loves.

I will pray for my Catholic brothers and sisters as they elect a new leader. However, I join Wills in not expecting a new face to change either the power structure or the church's position on contraception, female priests, or homosexuality. Yes, the College of Cardinals will remain an inflexible, old boys club. Out of this group of devout male servants will come the next Pope. That much we know for sure.

Grace and peace,

James Brassard



Worship Notes

February 17: The First Sunday in Lent is known as the Devil's Sunday. We will follow Jesus into the wilderness where he deals with the Devil. Yes, twenty minutes on the Devil we know and the Devils we don't.

February 24: Third Sunday in Lent: The Psalmist's declares in Psalm 27 "that the Lord is our light, our salvation, our stronghold, our confidence, our safety, our shelter, our teacher, and our Savior." What is the source of our confidence (of lack of it)? Why does our confidence fall under the corrosive power of negative comments? We will look at the spiritual resources that supply and sustain our confidence.

Do You Have Items in the CCPC Freezer?

If you have any items in the freezer, please take them home. Some of the items appear to be left from the power outages last summer. We will be cleaning the freezer at the end of February and will be getting rid of any unclaimed items.

Any questions, please contact Margaret Hallau.

Thank you!

CCPC Annual per Capita

A friendly reminder that annual per capita for each member is \$36.00. Checks should be made out to the church and either put in the Financial Secretary's mailbox or mailed to the attention of the Financial Secretary. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the church office or our Financial Secretary, Marie Farney.

Thank you!

"The word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Looking for a different Lenten discipline this year?

Join us in the Sanctuary each morning (except Sundays) during Lent at 7:15 AM for the reading of the daily lectionary and a brief prayer.

We are usually finished by 7:30 AM.

DEACON'S CORNER

This is the 25th in a series of articles about living well by considering the host of things we can change in our lives, our homes and our surroundings that can make our lives healthier, happier, and safer. Special thanks to Joy Bible, former Moderator of the Board of Deacons, for sharing her wisdom and expertise through the Deacon's Corner. We will be preparing a complete set of Deacon's Corner articles to share with CCPC.

As we age there are two areas of our life that become both difficult and sometimes become detrimental to our health. These areas are dealing with change and avoiding making decisions. Today, many of us find ourselves overwhelmed by our homes. Our homes are becoming too difficult to maintain, too expensive to keep up and difficult to navigate in. Yet, every time we think about a change or having to pack up our home and memories of many years, the task becomes overwhelming.

There are so many downsizing options for seniors today. The challenges of deciding what you are looking for in a new setting can be scary. Unfortunately, many seniors procrastinate on downsizing and miss out on years of enjoyment of a new phase of life. Some are scared of change, even when the change is good. Some are nostalgic about their home and even have a good bit of their identity wrapped up in those four walls. Many just simply don't know how to go about it.

Although economics plays a big part in whether or not to move or downsize, it really has more to do with quality of life. According to Smart Money, the savings of a smaller home makes more long-term sense than waiting until the housing market improves. Rather than letting go of what was and embracing a change of what could be, many hold on to the past and in doing so can find themselves more isolated, with health and mobility declining. It would be tragic to forfeit years of sweet opportunities life can offer because you are bound to the chores, burdens and responsibilities a big home may create.

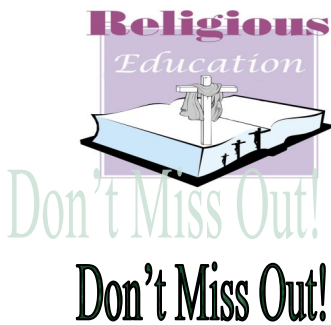
Granted, downsizing is not simple. Selling a house, finding another place to live, sorting out a home after decades of living there, moving and reorganizing are difficult tasks. But the most difficult part of all is just making the decision to change. Once that decision is made, then the planning can begin and a new chapter in your life can blossom. Reach out to family and friends to help with both planning and with transition.

Another benefit of making the decision to downsize and act on it while able is that it gives you the control of what is to happen, where you will go, instead of waiting until family have to make those decisions for you. If you decide to downsize, there are many companies who provided special services to help seniors with their moves. Many of the senior communities also provided an array of services to help facilitate an easy transition to a new home.

For many, a retirement community provides many opportunities to socialize and also feel safer, surrounded by others. The decision to downsize can lead to more leisure time. Rather than being bound to care for an overly large home and its upkeep, seniors can enjoy their time to relax, play golf, read or have fun with their friends or travel. Another reason to downsize is to be closer to grandkids and family.

Have faith in your ability to make a wise choice. Plan what to expect, what will be involved in the move, account for feelings that might appear as change takes place. Make sure someone you trust is there to help with the transitions and the conversations that take place regarding a move. Downsizing can be a stressful and challenging task- especially if you are not physically or cognitively capable of deciding what needs to be done. But in the end, an overwhelming number of seniors who were brave, made the decision to move, kept faith in themselves, and are very happy. Most wondered why they hadn't moved a long time ago.

Today, we are healthier and smarter, more active and longer-lived than ever before in history. Think of the possibilities, be it a condo, senior community, assisted living, or cottage. Life past sixty, seventy, eighty and onward can continue to be part of our finest passage.



Wayne Smith's **Adult Ed Series**

On Sunday, February 10th, the turnout was tremendous for the first class in Wayne Smith's series of classes, *Episodes in American Religious History*, held at 11:15 AM in the Adult Ed Room. You won't want to miss out on the next three:

Feb 17—*How did the Second Great Awakening in the 1820's and 1830's Affect Society?*

Mar 3—*What are the Origins of American Fundamentalism?*

Mar 24—*Why did the Religious Right Enter Politics in the 1970's?*

All are welcome!

Classes are free, so join us at 11:15 AM in the Adult Ed Room

Lenten Fellowship Lunches

Three Lenten Fellowship Luncheons will be held after the 10 AM service:

On February 24, Children's Ministry will host an Old Fashioned Maryland Church Lunch, featuring chicken from Popeye's. You are encouraged to bring one of your family's favorite recipes to share.

On March 10, the choirs will host a chili cook off, featuring a variety of chili recipes. You don't have to be a member of a choir to enter your favorite recipe! If you are not bringing, chili, you are encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert to share.

On March 17, the Deacons will host their annual potato bash, which includes baked potatoes with all the fixings you can imagine. You are encouraged to bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Each meal will include an activity area for children and kid-friendly items.

Having the meals right after church will encourage more people to attend and for families to bring their kids. It's also a chance for us to look around the congregation and invite a visitor or new member to join in the fun.!



Creativity Café

Join us every Wednesday in
Dodds Hall Conference Room starting
February 27 through April 17. Comfy couches and worktables are provided.

Bring your projects:
beads, knitting, crocheting, painting, mandalas, baskets, origami, whatever you
fancy! The
focus will be on fun, fellowship, and friends! This is a time to gather, create, relax,
and de-stress.

All are welcome. No experience required.
We will learn from one another.

BYOP and \$5 for dinner and extras.

Questions — please contact Linda Miller.

Forum on Gun Violence

Vincent DeMarco, a renowned advocate for public health causes including reducing teen smoking, restraining gun violence, and expanding health care access, will speak about the prevention of gun violence on Sunday, April 7, 2013, at 11:30 AM in Dodds Hall.

As National Coordinator of Faith United Against Tobacco, he is working to mobilize faith leaders in the country to help reduce smoking. As President of the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative, he is working to guarantee quality, affordable health care for all Marylanders.

And, as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, he is working to educate public health students from around the world on effective methods of advocating for public health policies.

Vincent DeMarco has been recognized for his work by organizations such as the Baltimore Sun, which declared him "Marylander of the Year" in 1988 and the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council, which awarded him its 2002 "Ecumenical Leadership Award". Families USA also recognized DeMarco at the 2007 Health Action forum as "Health Advocate of the Year."

"Vinny" DeMarco is also the subject of Michael Pertschuk's 2010 book entitled, "The DeMarco Factor: Turning Public Will into Political Power."

If you have questions or need more information about this forum, please contact Jim Woods.

Bowie Food Pantry

Food items

100% juice; canned chicken breast meat; applesauce

Fresh produce - fruits and vegetables

We cannot accept expired food items.

Financial Contributions

Monetary contributions can be designated for food or financial assistance; checks can be made out to Bowie Food Pantry

February Special: Personal Care Items

The Pantry is running low on some full size personal care items including shampoo, conditioner, and deodorant. Donations of any personal care items, full size or travel size, would be appreciated.

March Special: Toilet Paper

Each set of groceries includes one roll of toilet paper—let's make it two in March! Donations can be dropped off at the pantry or at one of our collection sites.

Girl Scout Gold Award Project

Emma Clement is working on her Gold Award by creating a pet food area at the Pantry and keeping it stocked. You can help Emma by dropping off donations of pet food at the pantry. Many of our families have cats and dogs, and it is nice to help them take care of these special family members. Interested? Contact the Pantry.

A Special Thank You!

The Bowie Food Pantry sent out a special thank you in their last newsletter to all of their year-round supporters, which included CCPC.

Christian Community Presbyterian



3120 Belair Drive
Bowie, MD 20715
Phone (301) 262-6008
Fax (301) 262-5177
Web: ccpc.bowiemd.org
E-mail: ccpcbowie@verizon.net

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

