



The Caller

April 15, 2013

News from CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

President Calvin Coolidge returned from worship one Sunday and his wife asked him, "What was the sermon about?" Cal replied, "Sin." His wife added, "Well, what did the preacher say about sin?" The President gave his typically terse response, "He's against it." Until relatively recently the moral message heard from American pulpits was to be against things that are harmful to the body and the spirit. Churchgoers regularly heard sermons warning against the evils of alcohol, gambling, gluttony, and greed. These messages are based on two clear New Testament themes. First, that each life is precious. The Apostle Paul says in Romans, "We are not our own, we were bought with a price." Secondly, we are to take care of our bodies because "our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit."

Cultural shifts have eroded the influence of Bible-based morality as Libertarianism has dominated American political discourse. Libertarianism claims that each individual has the right to decide what to do even if it is harmful, as long as it doesn't physically cause harm to someone else. In a sense, unbridled individual freedom has trumped what is in the best interests of the society as a whole.

It took years to finally get the medical community to admit that cigarette smoking was indeed hazardous to one's health. Smoking decreases life expectancy between 6-9 years. Armed with this evidence and alarmed by the staggering medical costs, public health leaders worked to reduce smoking. Cigarette manufacturers were prohibited from advertising on television and warning labels were put on packages. Taxes were dramatically raised on all tobacco products. Most public buildings are now smoke free. Not surprisingly, the percentage of smokers in the country has declined dramatically. These changes have greatly reduced the harm caused by second-hand smoke. The side benefit is you can eat dinner in a restaurant and not have to wash your clothes afterwards to get the odor out.

With this in mind, I read with interest an article in the March 23rd *Economist* magazine titled, "No Smoke. Why the Fire?" The writer was talking about the rapidly growing popularity of electronic cigarettes. E-cigarettes work by turning nicotine infused liquid into vapor which is then inhaled. A user is said to be "vaping," not smoking. The benefits are no second-hand smoke and no smoking odor. The writer suggested that e-cigarettes might eventually outsell regular smokes. He did acknowledge that betting against an industry (i.e. big tobacco) with addicts for consumers carries obvious risks. Already the large tobacco companies are buying up the electronic cigarette manufacturers.

The writer failed to mention that nicotine, regardless of how it is delivered, constricts the blood vessels raising blood pressure and dramatically increasing the risks of strokes and heart attacks. Nicotine is a dangerous drug and the e-cigarettes are marketed as a safe alternative to smoking.

I fear a similar lie is being sold to the public with the legalization of marijuana. Several states have legalized it and Maryland is moving in that direction, starting with the legalization of "medical" marijuana. Although I believe clogging our court system and doubling our prison population by criminalizing marijuana use is unquestionably foolish, it is not entirely safe. The jury is still out about it being a gateway drug. In order to protect the safety of our roadways, states will need to find methods to test drivers under the influence of the drug. Employers will have to be allowed to test employees who are operating dangerous manufacturing equipment.

Life in democratic societies is rife with disagreements about right and wrong, what is just and unjust. What is in the best interest of the overall society? Is it fair when our insistence in unlimited personal liberty gives rights to the individual and shifts burdens and social costs to the rest of society? Those are big questions that deserve a larger hearing.

Grace and peace,
James Brassard



Worship Notes

April 21st and April 28th

Come and be amazed!

Session Announcement

A Congregational meeting will be held in the Sanctuary on May 5, following the 10 AM worship service. The purpose of the meeting is to elect five Elders and five Deacons for the Class of 2016 and a sixth Deacon to fill an unexpired Deacon term for the Class of 2015.

AARP Tax Aide Program

CCPC is one of nine sites in Prince George's County that sponsors an AARP Tax Aide program for the preparation of federal and Maryland state income tax returns for low to moderate income and senior taxpayers.

Our site provides this service on Tuesdays from early February through mid-April. Due to overwhelming demand, we added two additional days to our regular schedule. Our service is free and all returns are electronically filed. We completed 244 federal and state returns this season. CCPC also served as the site for the training and certification of all PG County volunteers in January. All volunteers must be trained and certified each year by the IRS and the State.

The CCPC AARP Tax Aide team:



DEACON'S CORNER

This is the 27th 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.

“Don't fool yourself. Don't think that you can be wise merely by being up-to-date with the times.” (1 Corinthians 3:18.) Ah, the times, they are a changing faster than we are. For many of us, the technology of today leaves us shaking our heads and feeling lost in the fast pace of it all. We feel more vulnerable to others and to the very technology that is supposed to enhance our lives. “The real truth is that much of what we were all taught is not so much how the world really works as it is how the world should work.” For some, the computer still remains a “contraption” they do not want anything to do with.

Yet, it is becoming more and more difficult in the world we live in to conduct any business, pay bills, get medical records, communicate, etc. without some knowledge of the computer. Bowie's Senior Center does provide classes for those willing to learn the basics of the computer. But, even with or without computer knowledge, we are all open to becoming a victim of the technology, i.e. cell phones, texting, Twitter, etc.

New words to add to our vocabulary are “phishing” (pronounced “fishing”) and “catfish.” Phishing scams are basically fraudulent e-mail messages appearing to come from legitimate enterprises trying to collect various forms of your personal information. Phishing is one of the biggest dangers in information security on the internet. Learn to recognize phishing scams and other hoaxes that are designed to steal your identity. Delete e-mails and text messages that ask you to confirm or provide personnel information. The same holds true for phone calls, where someone calls asking you to confirm your bank, checking account numbers, or any information on a credit card. Do not give any personal information over the phone at any time! Be aware of people coming to your door, asking to check something in your home or wanting to sell you something. Be very careful when opening the door to anyone! Catfish is a term used to describe a person who creates a false identity online in order to lure people into what would appear as a romantic relationship. Many catfish prey on people who are lonely and vulnerable.

There are so many people out in the world today that do not have our best interest at heart. The greatest gift we can give ourselves is a healthy dose of “common sense.” There is a big difference between being paranoid and having healthy skepticism, and between fear and awareness. We, as Christians, want to believe people have our best interest at heart or at least care like we do. But in today's world, we and our children have to be alert, use common sense, and verify. There is a reason for the old cliché: If it is too good to be true, it probably is. It is a sad commentary of the times, but a man's word is NOT always his bond or a handshake may not seal the deal. It appears that common sense is uncommon in today's world. Our world is full of knowledgeable people, but sadly we may be short of wise people.





Piano Recital



The piano students from the Ricci Rogel Music Studio will be performing in recital on Saturday, May 4 at 3 PM in the Sanctuary.

The public is invited to attend this free recital and the reception afterwards.

Donations of canned goods will be taken for the Bowie Interfaith Food Pantry.

Questions — contact Susan at ricci-rogel@msn.com.

Adult Education Class

“IF THE ANSWER IS “THE TOWER OF BABEL”, WHAT’S THE QUESTION?”

The Art of Asking Questions

It's hard to read the Bible without being left with some questions, but how do we go about even asking them? To be honest, what we get out of the Bible is in direct proportion to what questions we ask of it. Questions like, "Did this really happen?" or "What's going on in the story?" or even "Why is this important for me?" barely scrape the surface of what we could possibly be asking. And HOW we ask the questions will influence how broad an understanding we gain.

How can we approach the same scenes with different eyes - and different needs? What various types of questions are there?

Truth be told, the Bible asks its own questions as well. They are of prime importance in teaching us how to ask.

The aim of this course is to aid the questioner in developing his or her craft as we look at the Tower of Babel through a variety of perspectives. Remember, if your questions can be answered with just a few words, you aren't asking enough questions.

Class is from April 28 through May 26 at 11:15 AM in the Adult Ed Conference Room.

Classes are free so please bring your questions and join us!

It's that time of year again!

Spring Share Shop!

The Share Shop will be Saturday morning, May 11
from 7:30 AM until 10:30 AM in Dodds Hall.

Clothing, household items, DVDs, CDs, books, toys, etc, that are in good enough shape to give to a friend, may be dropped off in Dodds Hall the week of May 6.

On Saturday morning, come and see if there are any items you'd like to take home. Doors open to the public at 9:00 AM so come early for the best selections.

Questions? Ask Margaret.

Spring Cleaning Workday

We had a poor turnout for the workday on April 6th — only about a dozen volunteers. As usual, the Buildings and Grounds Committee members and our CCPC Unsung Hero were well represented.

I would like to personally thank the following people who participated: Jermaine (Hudson House Client); Dave Conrad; Ann [Evankovich] Fleming; Skip Oates; Mark Pfarrer; Miriam and Don Salisbury; Debbie Sell; Heather Sell; Ann and Bob Shelby; and Al Wimbish.

I realize that Saturdays are busy days and families have many activities. However, we would like to keep this task in house and avoid a costly contract with a landscape company. If you were not able to participate in the cleanup day, but still want to help, please sign up to adopt one of the garden plots.

The signup sheet for the garden plots will be on the easel in the Atrium for the next few weeks. We hope to see a full sheet.



*I think that if ever a mortal heard the voice of God
it would be in a garden at the cool of the day.*

~F. Frankfort Moore~ *A Garden of Peace*



Bowie *Interfaith* Food Pantry

April Special Household Cleaning Supplies

Many of our families ask us for cleaning supplies including toilet bowl cleaners, dishwashing detergent, and all purpose cleaners. We have a few items in stock, but we would like to have enough so that everyone can have one item. If you are interested in donating, please drop off any of the supplies at the Food Pantry or on the brown table in the Atrium.

Food Pantry's Greatest Food Item Needs

Canned fruit/applesauce ❖ Rice ❖ Pork & Beans ❖ Baked Beans
100% Juice – bottles or boxes ❖ Macaroni & Cheese ❖ Jelly

Traveling this Spring or Summer?

Don't forget that the Pantry accepts travel size shampoo, conditioner, soap, lotion, etc. in addition to regular size personal care items. Our supply of travel size items is dwindling so remember us and please don't leave those items behind in the hotel room!



***Community Gardens* Volunteer Opportunity**

Last year, volunteers planted vegetables and herbs in the three raised beds located outside the Pantry. We are in need of groups to "adopt" each of the raised beds. Groups would be responsible for planning, planting, weeding, watering, and harvesting the vegetables.

The Pantry has a volunteer from the Green Team who has lots of ideas/helpful hints about the beds, but they need volunteers to execute them.

Please let us know ASAP if you are interested in taking on this project. Planting time is here!

***St. Mary's Car Raffle* Benefits the Food Pantry**

Frances Rocha is selling tickets on behalf of the Pantry for the St. Mary's Car Raffle to benefit St. Mary's Grade School.

The Pantry will receive half of the proceeds from tickets sold through the Pantry and \$1,000 for a winning ticket!

The drawing is May 18.

Tickets are \$5.00 each and automatically enter you into four drawings for four cars: 2013 Lincoln MKZ, 2013 Ford Mustang, 2013 Ford Fusion, 2013 Ford Escape.

For more info or to purchase tickets, please contact Frances at 301-262-5909.

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

