



OUTLOOK

April, 2016

10010 Fernwood Road, Bethesda, MD 20817

BethesdaUCC.org

301-365-3387

SHARING OUR BUILDING

At the annual meeting we heard that one of the things contributing to our financial difficulties was the loss of some income from groups that were no longer using our building. Well, things are looking a bit better now.

You have probably noticed CrossPointe Fellowship events listed on our calendar. Trustee Mike Toman says that the congregation, currently around 30 in number and mostly Rwandans, is led by Pastor Claudine Barandagiye. Their worship service is held in the fellowship hall at 2PM. They have a fellowship/music practice time starting at 7PM Fridays. He was told their musical worship is extremely lively, with liberal use of African drums. Their services are in a mix of French and English because they want to be able to reach out to non-francophone people as well.

The second group that may be using our building is a Spanish Seventh Day Adventist congregation: The Trustee Team is still working out the details of the agreements so they are not completely on board yet, but it looks hopeful. This group is, as the name suggests, composed of Hispanic members who worship in Spanish. The pastor is Willy Benzaquen. Worship will be Saturday mornings starting at 9.30 (and provisions have been made so that their parking does not impinge on Twin Springs Farm Market). They also will have a fellowship time Saturday evenings starting at 5PM. Mike understands that they also have a very lively style of musical worship.

We hope that by providing a welcoming place, these new church starts will grow and flourish and become strong independent churches.

BRIGHT SUNDAY/ HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

Risus paschalis is the Latin phrase that describes this theological understanding; it means, "Easter laughter." Many churches on the first Sunday following Easter celebrate and observe a "Bright Sunday" or "Holy Humor Sunday." This tradition is connected to the Easter Monday picnics and festivities that many countries still celebrate. The service of worship is a time to celebrate what God did in the Resurrection by sharing humorous stories and reminding each other that Death did not and does not win. *"Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* --1 Corinthians 15:55-57.

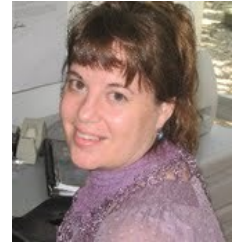
On April 3rd, the Sunday following Easter Sunday, our church will celebrate our own "Bright Sunday/Holy Humor Sunday." Come, prepared to have a laugh at our mortality and to engage in a bit of holy joy. During worship, the liturgy, prayers, hymns, and sermon message will all have a joyful theme, and together we will chase away the Devil of Despair with our light-hearted humor.

A YEAR OF MAKING MUSIC

Because of his busy schedule teaching music full time in the DC schools, jazz at George Washington University, and performing on weekends, Jim Levy has had to resign from being a co-director of Music at BUCC.

Thank you, Jim, for a wonderful year of making music with our choir and enhancing our worship with your gift of jazz, improvisation, and musical wit. You inspired us, and we wish you well as you continue to inspire students of all ages to express themselves through music.

Martha Knouss
Moderator and Choir Member



Where man sees but withered leaves, God sees sweet flowers growing.

---Albert Lighton

Let every man and woman count himself immortal. Let him catch the revelation of Jesus in his resurrection. Let him say not merely, "Christ is risen," but "I shall rise."

--Phillips Brooks

I do not know when the truth of the Resurrection seeped into my consciousness so that it became Truth with a Capital "T." It was a slow dawning, perhaps, the way that you discover that a new habit has curiously formed and taken root in you, the way you don't have to work so hard at putting on your running shoes or taking your morning vitamin—you don't even think about it anymore; it becomes ingrained and part of your morning routine. I don't know when this happened and I don't recall any trumpets celebrating with music or flags waving ceremoniously, but Jesus resurrected in bodily form – that is, him being resurrected of a whole piece, and of a whole truth, sprung from the grave of my awareness one ordinary morning and sent shivers of wonder down my spine. Because if Christ is risen (in the present tense, and not left to rot in the corners of historical time), and if our bodies cannot be confined to dusky graves or our mind's narrow limits, then God might indeed have more than one surprise in store for me—and for you—in our lifetime.

The bodily resurrection is a difficult truth for anyone to swallow, devout and not-so-devout Christians included. Scientific explanations (or the lack thereof) do not work for this kind of truth. I have seen people walk out of all manner of graves and maybe you have too. The dying man who doesn't become terrifically depressed, even though he has every reason to do so; the husband and wife who each kindle and stir the barely flickering embers of their marriage into a passionate fire after infidelity; the new widow who takes that first excursion without her loving spouse and actually enjoys the sunset and surroundings, the adult child who re-emerges after a crisis of faith with renewed purpose and true selflessness...all of these are instances of the bodily dead rising...without the benefit of resuscitation, drugs, or magic mumbo-jumbo. Resuscitation does not and cannot explain a living Jesus on the move, but God can.

Now, I realize that what I am writing is highly debatable. I imagine that some of you will eagerly corner me on Sunday morning to tell me precisely what you believe or disbelieve about Jesus rising from that empty

tomb on Easter morning. It is easier, you may say, to believe in Easter bunnies and in the return of spring, easier to believe in Santa Claus (wrong season, I know) and that our health care system has your best interests at heart. I get it—because I once stood in your proverbial shoes. I could argue my way out of believing in the ancient creed, especially that part, "He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father..."). But here's a curious notion: often the living are dead, and the dead are living, and we do not discern the difference because we are focused only on what can be proven or not.

Let the dead rise with Christ and the living be buried with Christ that together we may wander into Mystery and that our eyes may be opened to the greatness of God in every moment—anticipated and unanticipated. If you do not yet believe, please try to find as many ways as you can to celebrate the Easter season anyway for the sake of love. God knows, we need Easter as a way of looking at this world. When we look at people who inflict harm intentionally and terrorize people in the name of hate and religion, we need Easter to keep our collective and individual bearings and to witness to good news in the midst of so, so much pain and suffering. As you partake of bread and cup and begin to comprehend Jesus' great love for humankind and his rising *in peace*, as you receive mystery upon mystery from ancient story and song, you may indeed find this Truth seeping into your heart, taking root, and lifting you from whatever grave you have been inhabiting. Easter is both a season and a way of being in the world—it is a worldview and a promise.

Claim it...and live. The resurrection of bodies is small potatoes to a God as great as ours.

May Easter live in you and on you, brothers and sisters!

Rev. Dee

Bible Reading ... at Home

(Adapted from SeasonsFUSION - *Seasons of the Spirit*@Wood Lake Publishing)

April 3 - Speak Out

Acts 5:27–32 Psalm 118:14–29 or Psalm 150
Revelation 1:4–8 John 20:19–31

The story of the community of Jesus' disciples after the Resurrection is told in the book of Acts. This book moves readers from stories of Jesus into the stories of Jesus' community.

God's loving ways cannot be contained. Like the ripples made when a stone is tossed into calm water, the Spirit works through people and communities whose words and deeds bear witness to God, who raised Jesus to life. God calls all such witnesses to accountability and forgiveness. God still speaks, inviting all to receive the Spirit and follow Christ.

There is our call as a faith community, to grow in the story and witness to what we know. In the repeated retelling of the story of resurrection, there is a time when the fear moves over and confidence begins. May we be sent out in that confidence where we rest on the authority of faith rather than the world, as we become "witnesses to these things."

April 10 - A New Vision

Acts 9:1–6, (7–20) Psalm 30
Revelation 5:11–14 John 21:1–19

The Season of Easter is about transformation and change. The morning of Easter, we witness the biggest transformation of them all. Jesus is alive! Death is transformed to life.

No matter the darkness – be it death, sadness, a hardened heart, injustice – God can overcome it. We are all empowered to triumph over darkness, to have hope, and to be transformed. We are called to see with new eyes.

The story of Saul is one of personal transformation. Not only for Saul in terms of his conversion, but for all who were traveling with him and also for Ananias.

The true challenge for us today, though, is to connect and understand the story of Ananias as it relates to our lives. Where is God calling us to be agents of healing in a broken and even dangerous

world? In what situations do we need to have courage, trust God, and show up to be part of God's mission of reconciliation and peace?

April 17 - Showing Up

Acts 9:36–43 Psalm 23
Revelation 7:9–17 John 10:22–30

In scripture, we encounter role models of discipleship that are expressed in compassionate words and deeds. Such life-giving acts take shape in ministry with those in our communities and outside our circles. Ministry is shown by words and deeds that wipe away tears, restore life, and testify to God's love. Ministry unfolds when we open our lives to the Spirit and follow God's leading. Ministry is done when we see a need and show up. Ministry is done in response to experienced grace.

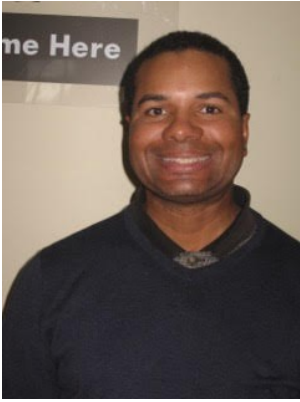
For the early church community, church was simply that – a community. People worshipped, sang, prayed, shared meals, and served others together in small communities. The important thing to remember about these early examples of church is that they didn't stay in a room or a building. They went out to transform the world.

April 24 - Tipping Point

Acts 11:1–18 Psalm 148
Revelation 21:1–6 John 13:31–35

The texts for this week point to a message of inclusion, of a God who goes beyond human set boundaries and practice. God has done, and still does, new things in our midst. God seeks individuals and communities willing to cross thresholds so God's way might "spread like wild-fire." In what new ways might Jesus' command to love take shape and spread?

Peter's experience on the rooftop is a powerful story reminding us that sometimes we need to have our views changed. We might read this story as a simple one of Peter realizing something that seems obvious to us – that Gentiles are included in the people of God. But that's probably because we are Gentiles, and know that we are included. Take the story a little further, and wonder who needs to hear the message that they belong.



NEW MEMBER NOVATO TORNERO

Novato joined BUCC a month or so ago, and, at that time Outlook promised some additional information. Here is a little background. He was born and grew up in Washington, DC. He did not move here from somewhere else as so many of us have. He is a graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School in DC. He currently lives in Germantown and is planning on attending Montgomery College as a Business major soon. Novato is usually one of the early arrivals at church on Sundays and as a result occasionally gets involved in setting up chairs in the Fellowship Hall if there is something planned for there.

We welcome Novato into our fellowship and are sure he will contribute much to the life of our church.

GRUNGE SATURDAY

MAY 7, 2016 8:30 – 1130 AM

On Grunge Saturday we get out the painting, cleaning and fixing supplies and spruce up the church. We have everything from landscaping to indoor and outdoor clean-up to, minor repairs and changing of light bulbs. Our rain plan will include some painting and organizing of our indoor spaces and if Mother Nature blesses us with a pretty day we will focus on trimming, and cleaning up the grounds.

Can you help? You can stay for an hour or all 3 hours and see some important improvements in our church home. Bring your own tools or use the ones we have. At the end of it all we will celebrate with Pizza and soft drinks.

In addition to giving your time you can point out some things you might see between now and Grunge Day so we can put them on our list to be addressed at that time. Address your findings to Dan Driver at sala.driv@verizon.net or 301-642-8910.

INTERESTING CHURCH JOB AVAILABLE

After about 13 years as editor of Outlook, I think it is time to let someone else have some fun putting it together. It really is a fun task and fairly simple. It amounts to deciding what are the most important things happening at BUCC in the next month and either writing about them yourself or finding someone else to do it. The editor also aggregates all the group meetings that will come up in the next month (Book Group, Seekers, etc.) fitting them into the inside pages.

Colleen is a critical part of the Outlook operation. She fits all the articles into the format pages, prints the copies, and has been stamping and mailing each issue. The

BOOK GROUP

On Wednesday, April 13 at 3:30 pm in the parlor, the Book Group will discuss Orange is the New Black by Piper Kerman. This biography describes the author's year long experience in a woman's prison.

"With a career, a boyfriend, and a loving family, Piper Kerman barely resembles the reckless young woman who delivered a suitcase of drug money ten years before. But that past has caught up with her. Convicted and sentenced to fifteen months at the infamous federal correctional facility in Danbury, Connecticut, the well-heeled Smith College alumna is now an inmate.... From her first strip search to her final release, Kerman learns to navigate this strange world with its strictly enforced codes of behavior and arbitrary rules. She meets women from all walks of life, who surprise her with small tokens of generosity, hard words of wisdom, and simple acts of acceptance... Kerman's story offers a rare look into the lives of women in prison." (Amazon.com)

All are welcome to join the discussion and fellowship.

editor can, and does, help with this step if there is a time crunch. We are approaching a 50% electronic distribution, which simplifies stamping and mailing a lot. Colleen creates no copy and relies on the editor to decide what gets printed.

Organizationally, Outlook falls under the Welcome Team, but they have had little to say about what Outlook has done while I have been editor.

If you think you might be interested in taking over this task, speak to or email Jerry Liddel dotjlerliddel@gmail.com Looking forward to hearing from you.

SEEKERS

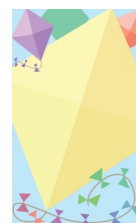
The BUCC spiritual book group, Seekers, will meet on Thursday, April 21, at 7:15 in the BUCC parlor.

We will discuss the book *Learning to Walk in the Dark* by Barbara Brown Taylor. Reading of the book is not required. All are invited to attend our insightful discussion.

Barbara Brown Taylor challenges our negative associations with darkness and our attraction to light in this thought-provoking book. She draws on her own experiences—from exploring caves and experimenting with blindness, to her questioning of her own religious training and faith—to explore what might be gained by embracing darkness, teaching us how to find God even in darkness, and giving us a way to let darkness teach us what we need to know.

COME FLY A KITE OR JUST RELAX WITH US!

Weather permitting, we will gather at the Mattie Stepanek Park at the corner of Gaither Road and Piccard Drive in Rockville from **1:30 until 3ish on Sunday April 3** to fly kites, walk in the park, play at the playground, or sit and talk with friends. Please bring a lawn chair if you have one. We will meet at the Mattie Stepanek monument and peace garden. If you have a kite, please bring it. Event open to young and old, alike.



We've Lost a Friend

too late for the March Outlook.

Elizabeth (Betsy) Ross Jones died peacefully at Transitions Health Care in Sykesville Maryland at the age of 96 on February 5, 2016.

Betsy was born about 100 miles south of Chicago in Champagne Illinois on November 23, 1919. Her family then moved to Tacoma Park, MD. Her maiden nickname was Betsy Ross, and she was in the Takoma Park 4th of July Parade as Betsy Ross in 1928. Her brother, Malcolm Ross, was born in 1929 and their parents were Clarence S. Ross & Helen Frederick Ross.

Betsy graduated from High School in 1937. She enrolled in the University of Maryland at College Park, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Biology in 1941. Betsy taught the 1941-1942 school year at Bethesda Chevy Chase High School. In the fall of 1942, she returned to Illinois to start her Master's degree at the University of Illinois at Champagne-Urbana. In 1943, she received her Master's of Science Degree in Biology and returned to Tacoma Park where she continued

ELIZABETH (BETSY) JONES

Note: *One of our Founding Members, Betsy Jones, passed into eternal life on February 5th. We received word of this*

teaching at Bethesda Chevy Chase High School until 1948.

In September 1948, she married Morris Thompson Jones and moved to Oak Park, IL, just outside of Chicago. After the birth of her two sons, Morris took a job with the National Institutes of Health, when Morris and Betsy moved back to Bethesda in 1956. She and Morris were married for 54 years prior to his death in August 2002.

She was a devoted wife and devoted mother to her two sons, Gregory Morris Jones of Frederick, MD. and, Bruce Lee Jones, of Centerville, VA. She enjoyed her four grandchildren Brian Morris Jones, Kristen Jones Askarian, Timothy Reaver Jones, and Roy Franklin Jones.

Betsy was a founding member of Bethesda Congregational Church in 1957 where she taught Sunday School. She was loved bird watching, to read and to play bridge. Her family vacationed at the Outer Banks when she was a child in the 1930s, and she continued the tradition by vacationing on the Outer Banks with her children and grandchildren.



COMMUNITY BASED SHELTER (CBS) WEEK April 24-30, 2016

Please mark your calendars for CBS week. Our participation with the CBS is one of the ways of honoring the BUCC covenant to be of service to all in Christ's name.

We are responsible for providing all of the meals, kitchen supplies, and for serving dinner to the 35 homeless residents at the CBS.

The Community Based Shelter (CBS) provides transitional housing in a shelter environment for single adult women already committed to changing their lives with the support of mental health, medical, and therapeutic programs. This 30-bed facility serves close to 300 women annually.

Volunteers provide all the meals every day of the year. The CBS could not operate without the involvement of the 60 plus congregations and community groups who provide all of the meals, serving supplies, kitchen volunteers, and miscellaneous items required.

Many BUCC volunteers are needed to help in a variety of ways:

- Providing dinner- entrées, salads, vegetables, and/or side dishes
- Serving dinner- at least 3 people each evening
- Preparing lunch bags
- Making sandwiches
- Donating money --Make check payable to BUCC-memo:
"Community Based Shelter (CBS)"

Please take a look at the sign up sheet in the narthex and try to select some way that you can help. We need your support. Thanks for helping

If you have any questions, contact Bette Pappas at 301-231-7144 or jimbetzoe@aol.com)

WHAT: CONVERSATIONS ON RACE WHEN: APRIL 17, MAY 22, JUNE 12 AFTER SUNDAY SERVICE RSVP: revjeant@gmail.com

In his latest book, *America's ORIGINAL SIN: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America*, Jim Wallis of Sojourners says:

"We are not now, nor will we ever be, a 'postracial' society....Only by telling the truth about our history and genuinely repenting of its sins, which still linger, can we find the true road to justice and reconciliation."

The Faith in Action team is hosting a series of *Conversations on Race*—three sessions following the Sunday worship service, meeting on April 17, May 22, and June 12. This is an opportunity in a safe and sacred space to ask our questions, express concerns, reflect on what we are missing, and consider what part our church might play with regard to this issue.

Ideally we would like to know ahead of time if you plan to attend, so that we can send you an article to "prime the pump" and help to guide our discussion. If you plan to come, please let Jean Thompson know at revjeant@gmail.com or call 301-493-4946. And if you don't decide till the last minute, please join us anyway!

BUCC – APRIL 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	2 9:30 AM SDA 5:00 PM SDA
3 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 1:30 PM Kite Flying -- Mattie Stepanek Park 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	4	5 3:30 PM Worship Team	6 7:00 PM Metro Garden Club	7	8 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	9 9:30 AM SDA 5:00 PM SDA
10 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	11	12	13 3:30 PM BUCC Book Group	14 7:00 PM Christian Education Team	15 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	16 9:30 AM SDA 5:00 PM SDA
17 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 12:00 PM Conversations on Race 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	18	19 7:00 PM Leadership Council Meeting	20	21 7:15 PM Seekers	22 12:00 PM DEADLINE for OUTLOOK articles 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	23 9:30 AM SDA 5:00 PM SDA
24 Community Based Shelter Week 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	25 Community Based Shelter Week	26 Community Based Shelter Week	27 Community Based Shelter Week	28 Community Based Shelter Week	29 Community Based Shelter Week 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship	30 Community Based Shelter Week 9:30 AM SDA 5:00 PM SDA

NEW UCC CHURCH IN MARYLAND

On March 12 there was an Ecclesiastical Council of the Potomac Association for the purpose of approving a new church for the Potomac Association of the UCC. The meeting was held at Jubilee UCC in Lanham, MD. The church seeking admission was Good Hope Baptist UCC church.

They were formed about four years ago, branching off from Covenant Baptist UCC Church in DC. As their name suggests, they still feel a connection to the Baptist tradition, but they found the UCC a more comfortable fit with their basic beliefs. They are an "Open and Affirming" church. They still participate in some Baptist denominational groups. Their pastor, the Rev. Kenneth King, and some other members were part of Covenant Baptist Church before Good Hope was organized. After meeting for a few years in a Presbyterian church in Laurel, they are now meeting at First Trinity Lutheran church on E Street in downtown DC.

In the discussion, there was some concern about gender equality as expressed in their bylaws. We were assured the problems were really just with wording and that they have been corrected. The vote to admit the church as a member of the Potomac Association UCC was unanimous (with one abstention.)

We welcome this new UCC church to the Potomac Association.

Lawrence "Yogi" Berra

*In theory, there should be no difference between
practice and theory, in practice, there is.*

**YOUR HELP IS NEEDED IN PREPARING
AND/OR SERVING THE HOMELESS.**

**COMMUNITY BASED SHELTER WEEK
APRIL 24-30**



OUTLOOK

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