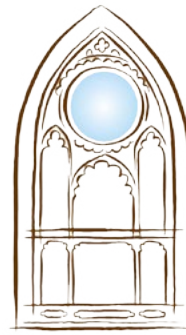


THE TIDINGS

JUNE 2015



GOOD NEWS FROM

BROWN MEMORIAL
PARK AVENUE 
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ALIVE IN THE CITY AND THE WORLD
www.brownmemorialparkavenue.org

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PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

BY REV. TIMOTHY HUGHES, ASSOCIATE PASTOR
tim@browndowntown.org

"It's been a remarkable time to be a pastor in West Baltimore."

That's a statement that I've made repeatedly during past weeks, as Baltimore City grieved, protested, and finally exploded into violence in the wake of the death of Freddie Gray. Of course, the tidy timeline of the previous sentence doesn't do justice to the complexity of what's occurred – the grief, protest, and violence have been intertwined in a sad history that spans generations.



Longtime Baltimore City residents are quick to invoke the rioting of 1968, saying that they can't believe we are at this moment again. For some it is an unwelcome retroactive flashback after decades of perceived progress. For others it is simply a very public confirmation of injustices that have continued unabated for decades. What is clear is that there is an undeniable crisis born of suffering and racism and neglect in Baltimore City. It is a systemic failure but it is also a moral failure.

To be a church in West Baltimore is to confront the reality that loving Jesus in the form of the poor and oppressed is hardly a metaphor. We are a church of means in a neighborhood on fire. Brown Memorial has a long tradition of seeking justice and connecting to Baltimore City but we fool ourselves if we think we are not in a crucible right now. How will we respond over the long haul? How will we live into the future of Baltimore City? How might we too have to change?

There have been some beautiful moments of redemption after the riots – clean-up efforts, block parties, and efforts to hold public officials accountable. But there is also a very seductive and subtle pull towards normalcy. "Things are finally starting to get back to normal," we say with some relief to faraway friends. We have to recognize that impulse for what it is. A return to normalcy is a return to a corrupted and racist system that benefits some at the expense of others. Baltimore doesn't need normalcy. Baltimore needs prophets and repentance and boundary-crossing love. Those are the gifts of the church, if it can summon the courage to use them.

That's what I mean when I tell folks that it's a remarkable time to be a pastor in West Baltimore. This is God's calling to every church but unlike many we are not insulated by geography or history or means from the challenge of this present moment. Jesus is at our door. How will we respond?



SESSION UPDATE

- Trustee co-chair Bud Graves reported on the progress of improving security, repairing the south tower, installing fire and smoke detection for the sanctuary, installing chancel and balcony handrails, repairing the sanctuary floor from termite damage, and repairing the cupola.

- “Mission Town Hall”: the series of sermons and conversations about the concept of mission. The project was largely successful. Where do we go from here?

- Facilities Planning Team: The Bolton Hill Nursery School’s contract to rent facilities space will expire in December 2016. BHN has asked BMPA to reconsider terms and to extend the rental contract. A Facilities-Use committee will evaluate the church’s needs and make recommendations.

- The annual church officers’ dinner was held on May 1st at Anne Heuisler’s house.

- The annual session retreat occurred on Saturday, May 2nd, at The Center.

- The session met on Sunday mornings May 3rd, 10th, and 17th to hear faith statements of confirmands. Twelve eighth-graders were confirmed during worship on Sunday, May 17th:

Anna Elizabeth Connors
Katherine Elizabeth Egan
Adam Edward Forward
Ethan Florio Franetovich
Steedman McKay Jenkins
Julia Christen Luljak
Peter Christen Luljak

Carolina Grace Mills
Joanna Louise Schindler
Joshua Edward Sewell
Sean Trevor Sewell
Chloe Elizabeth Willis

Joshua and Sean Sewell received the Sacrament of Baptism before being confirmed.

- The clerk recorded the following deaths in the preceding month of members or friends of the congregation:

Mattie Lee Rose, mother-in-law of Henry Owens, on March 16, 2015.

Mother of Adrian Longs.

Pauline Piper on April 1st.

Emma Berry, sister of Ben Tillman, on March 31st.

Jack Hull, brother of Barbara Hull Francis, on April 5th.

Roosevelt Johnson, uncle of Sharon Holley, on April 12th.

Dr. Ralph Smialowicz, uncle of Associate Pastor Tim Hughes.

- The BMPA 2014 minutes were approved at the annual presbytery reading of the minutes at Babcock Memorial on May 11th.

If anyone in the congregation would like more information about any of these issues, I welcome questions.

Anne Heuisler
Clerk of the Session

MUSIC NOTES

By MICHAEL T. BRITT, MINISTER OF MUSIC
michael@browndowntown.org

In July, Brown Memorial will once again host a series of concerts and tours in celebration of ARTSCAPE. During the last two summers, these events have drawn many visitors who have admired our beautiful sanctuary, windows and our historic Skinner Pipe Organ.

We need your assistance to make this weekend a success. Won’t you please “lend a hand” in some way? Listed below are the events and their needs. If you are able to assist in any way, please contact me by phone or by e-mail. Thank you so much!

Friday, July 17 at 7:00 p.m. The 1928 silent film classic *The Circus* starring Charlie Chaplin. The film will be accompanied with an original score by

Michael Britt on the Skinner Organ. **Need: Ushers.**

Saturday, July 18 at 8:30 a.m. and Sunday, July 19 at 11:00 a.m. Breakfast with Tiffany. A tour of our famous Tiffany windows led by James E. Schuman. A light breakfast will be served before each tour. **Needs: Breakfast food – muffins, doughnuts, orange juice.**

Saturday, July 18 at 12:00 noon. An organ recital featuring organists Marvin Mills and Lizao Wang. **Need: Ushers.**

Sunday, July 19 at 2:00 p.m. A choral concert featuring the Schola and Luminare Choir from Archbishop Curley High School under the direction of Michael J. Gaffney. **Need: Ushers.**

Contact: Michael T. Britt, Minister of Music at 410.523.154, Ext. 16, or michael@browndowntown.org.

JUNE 2015

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY 2015

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: 2014-15 CONFIRMATION CLASS

Katie Egan
Adam Forward
Ethan Franetovich
Steedman Jenkins
Julia Luljak
Peter Luljak
Carolina Mills
Annie Schindler
Joshua Sewell
Sean Sewell
Chloe Willis



Top Right:

Rev. Tim Hughes and Rev. Andrew Foster Connors anoint the members of the 2014-15 Confirmation Class on Sunday, May 17. **Above:** The Class have hands laid on them by church leaders and family.

Photos by Doug Kapustin.

BMPA AT THE EIGHTH ANNUAL BOUNDARY BLOCK PARTY

The Boundary Block Party celebrated its eighth year of bringing together neighbors across boundaries of race and class in Central West Baltimore on Saturday, May 9 at the corner of Pennsylvania Avenue and Presstman Street. As a reflection of Brown's presence in the local community, BMPA's Soulful Sisters and choir member Barbara Cates performed under the direction of Michael Britt. Other BMPA members, including youth, volunteered at the craft table and helped serve food. The Boundary Block Party is the signature event of the No Boundaries Coalition, which aims to unite and empower residents and others affiliated with the neighborhoods of Central West Baltimore.

Photos by Susan Saudek



AN EARLY ADVOCATE OF THE STEM PROGRAM

BY ELLEN CARTER COOPER

Those who follow educational trends know that the latest effort is to fund and encourage STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) programs. Rick Thomas has espoused this position for a long time. His Linked In profile states that he is passionate about using the “application of science and engineering to solve challenging technical problems.”

Born in Baltimore in the Northwood area, Rick was influenced by his grandfather, who told him to work hard. His father emphasized persistence and discipline. When Rick attended high school in Harford County, he followed their advice and pursued his interest in science. He also sang with the tenor section of the Glee Club. His first job taught him lessons that were not consciously a part of the high school curriculum. Rick recalled that “flipping burgers at Gino’s taught me a lot about responsibility and treating all people right.”

Since science was a driving force in his life, Rick majored in chemistry when he attended Loyola University. After he earned his degree, he was hired by the Goddard Space Center. At Goddard, Rick identified technology to detect bacteria in water and waste water. After three years the scientist transferred to California where he acquired an appreciation of competitive sailing and teamwork.

When Rick returned to Maryland, he headed the United States Army biological detection system efforts. He was responsible for detecting harmful bacteria, viruses, and toxins. In fact, Rick has a patent for an electrostatic collection device (and a top secret security clearance). These days as a founder and co-partner of the EagleFirst Company, he shares his knowledge and expertise with companies serving military and homeland security.

A gregarious person, by nature, Rick exhibited his adventurous side approximately three years ago. He and Jeanne (his wife since 1982) visited BMPA to see their former music director at St. Margaret’s Catholic Church, Michael Britt. Brown Memorial impressed them so much that they never left. Both Jeanne and Rick joined the Handbell Choir. Additionally, he is an audio engineer, liturgist, a deacon, and a participant in the Feasting and Faith group.

The STEM enthusiast enjoys listening to records (those vinyl circular objects) and gardening. He and Jeanne take their 16 foot traditional sail boat out when weather permits. Gardening is another activity that



Rick Thomas

they enjoy. Their two children are both educators: a daughter who is a second grade teacher and a son who is a mathematics professor at Ithaca University.

Rick continues to be influenced by the words and lives of his grandfather and father. He stated, “I feel strongly about looking out for others” and “respect for everybody.” These beliefs rose to the surface recently when Rick attended a conference on biological detectors in St. Louis. There he met a man from Ferguson, Missouri who discussed the mutual challenges that his neighbors and the residents of Baltimore have faced this year.

According to Rick, BMPA is a “friendly, compassionate, and caring community”. He “would like more people to experience the joy of the community that we [Jeanne and Rick] presently experience.”

Meditation Circle

Please join us for a time of silence and community **every Sunday, 9:00-9:30 in the Church House**. All are welcome. Using a few words or an image to bring us to a place of stillness, we sit together in a circle of meditative quiet, ending with prayer. Through stilling our minds and opening our hearts, we find community with one another and with God. For more information or to be added to an e-mail list for the Meditation Circle, please contact June Fletcher-Hill at fletcherhill@msn.com or 410-367-0995. Plan to arrive a few minutes before 9:00 as we begin our time together right at 9:00.

BMPA CALENDAR

The following is a reminder of our weekly schedule, as well as a list of upcoming events this month. For a more detailed calendar and description of events, visit browndowntown.org.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays

- Meditation Circle, 9-9:30 a.m.
- No Education Hour
- Choir Warm-up (Through June 7)
- Worship, 10 a.m.

Wednesdays

- Weekday Bible Study, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Thursdays

- Prayer Shawl Ministry (Third Thursday of every month, 12:30 p.m.)
- Meditation on the Hill, 5:30 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS IN JUNE

- **Car Wash**, June 7, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
BMPA youth will wash cars in front of Brown Memorial to raise funds for summer trips. .
- **Soaring Eagles Learning Camp**, Monday, June 22 – Thursday, June 25. BMPA youth are leading this summer youth camp at Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS



06/02 Billy Clippinger	06/21 Dale Terrill
06/04 Will Brockman	06/22 Nancy Bandiere
06/04 Sarah Reiman	06/22 Peter Coulson
06/05 Elizabeth (Emy) Urban	06/22 Rebecca Crew
06/06 Lorrie Liang	06/22 Taylor Jackson
06/07 Lydia Beasley	06/22 Jihar Williams
06/10 Erika Brockman	06/23 Paul Forward
06/10 Cal Riorda	06/23 Rachel Forward
06/10 Adrienne Williams	06/23 Beth Allen
06/11 Loretta Byers	06/23 Richard "Rocco" Willis
06/11 Caleb Brennan Taylor	06/24 Patti Flowers-Coulson
06/12 Erin Emerick	06/26 Graham Bishai
06/12 Abby Jackson	06/26 Madora Henson
06/12 Peggy Obrecht	06/26 Kerry Johnston
06/12 Mary Obrecht	06/28 Margaret (Maggie) Dupre Johnston
06/13 Will Coulson	06/28 Keiffer (Jack) Jackson Mitchell, III
06/13 Robert Marshall	06/28 Geralyn Schroth
06/15 Noah Todd	06/28 Nancy Warner
06/18 Madison Riorda	06/30 Paul Newill-Schamp
06/19 Rain Hall	
06/19 Trevor Hoffberger	
06/21 Lily Bradford	
06/21 Joe Schindler	

Note: If you wish to have your birthday listed in The Tidings, please contact Sharon Holley, church secretary, at 410-523-1542, or via e-mail at Sharon@browndowntown.org.

A Prayer for Baltimore★

Let the rain come and wash away
the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds
held and nurtured over generations.
Let the rain wash away the memory
of the hurt, the neglect.
Then let the sun come out and
fill the sky with rainbows.
Let the warmth of the sun heal us
wherever we are broken.
Let it burn away the fog so that
we can see each other clearly.
So that we can see beyond labels,
beyond accents, gender or skin color.
Let the warmth and brightness
of the sun melt our selfishness.

So that we can share the joys and
feel the sorrows of our neighbors.
And let the light of the sun
be so strong that we will see all
people as our neighbors.
Let the earth, nourished by rain,
bring forth flowers
to surround us with beauty.
And let the mountains teach our hearts
to reach upward to heaven.
Amen.

**A Prayer for the World - Rabbi Harold Kushner – 2003
(Borrowed from the Meditation Circle)*

GIFTS OF STOCK

The giving of Stocks or other Securities, which have appreciated in value, June provide a tax advantage to you, the donor.

If you would like to make a gift to the church in this manner, please provide the following information to your broker.

DTC #0235

RBC Wealth Management

A/C #313-81881

**Account Name – Brown Memorial Park
Avenue Presbyterian Church**

Contact: Geoffrey Brent or Lisa Vetter

Phone Number: 410-316-5319

Please also inform Sharon Lucas, our Financial Administrator: slucas@browndowntown.org

JUNE RESPONSIBILITY SCHEDULES SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

For an itemized list of Responsibility schedules at BMPA, please click on this link: <http://www.browndowntown.org/index.php?s=backstage>

If you would like to participate in one of the areas of responsibility, please contact Sharon Holley at (410) 523-1542 or via e-mail at sharon@browndowntown.org.

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