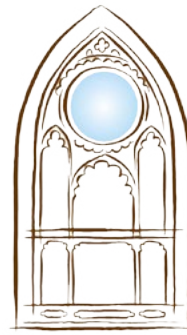


THE TIDINGS

FEBRUARY 2015



GOOD NEWS FROM

BROWN MEMORIAL
PARK AVENUE 
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

IN THIS ISSUE

PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS. 1

MUSIC NOTES 2

AN INVITATION FROM THE
GLOBAL MISSION
COMMITTEE 2

MEDITATION CIRCLE 2

REFLECTIONS ON MY
WORK TRIP TO ISRAEL . 3

TIFFANY SERIES CONCERT
HONORS OUR OWN J.
SPENCER HAMMOND..... 4

"ALL THE WORLD'S
A STAGE" 4

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS . 5

GIFTS OF STOCK 5

RESPONSIBILITY
SCHEDULE BOX 5

FEBRUARY 2015
AT BMPA 6



PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

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

MISSION INCARNATE

Last month, I accompanied the LGBT group to see Ava Duvernay's stunning new film, *Selma*. If you haven't seen it – you should. Somehow I had convinced myself that I was sufficiently familiar with the details of the Civil Rights Movement to watch the film impartially, but I should have known better. I left the theater overwhelmed with the power of the story and its sad relevance to our present cultural moment. Cinema has the power to take textbook history and clothe it in flesh and blood. In art – as in life – there is no substitute for incarnation.



Incarnate life experience has been on my mind a lot lately as I've worked with a group of high school youth from Brown Memorial and Zion Baptist Church. Since ending our monthly visits to Pedestal Gardens last May, we've been searching for new ways to build honest-to-God relationships across lines of race, class, and neighborhood. In December, a small group of BMPA youth met with young people from Zion to talk about Ferguson, injustice, and the diverse experiences of Baltimore City teenagers. They are working together now to plan a joint high school youth event on February 20. There is energy in this planning that I believe comes (in part) from incarnation, that moment when "issues" become people and "people" become friends. If the desire for justice is, at its most organic, a desire to love your neighbor as yourself, then surely the first step is simply to know your neighbor.

We're in the midst of a congregational conversation at Brown Memorial about mission. What is mission? What is our mission? If the Greek root of "mission" means "sending," then where are we being sent to participate in God's work in the world? There is a critical theological link between the "sending" of mission and the "relating" of incarnation. We are sent to others and others are sent to us so that we might understand more deeply the indwelling of God's Spirit in all people. From that deep place of relationship springs justice and love and worship of the One who made it so. Mission truly rooted in incarnation shakes free of the colonizing, patronizing impulses that plague so many of our "missionary" efforts, freeing us to love our neighbors and receive our neighbors' love.

Selma paints a picture of that kind of beloved community, in all its glorious, difficult complexity. I like to think that our own young people are painting that kind of picture, even as we speak. As much as we would like to pretend otherwise, it is sorely needed work in a world that so quickly forgets its most inspiring stories. May we be open to the sending. May we be open to the relating. May we have eyes to see the God who (unexpectedly) meets us in that place.

MUSIC NOTES

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

Question: When would be a good time to get involved in Music Ministry?

Answer: NOW, of course!!! There is room for all!
Please consider joining one of our choirs and ensembles!!



CHANCEL CHOIR

Sings weekly at our 11:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday. Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings from 7:00 – 8:45 p.m. in the sanctuary. We welcome new members for all voice parts. For additional information, please contact

Michael Britt at michael@browndowntown.org or 410-523-1542 #16.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Open to boys and girls in grades three through eight. The choir sings at Sunday worship throughout the year as scheduled. Rehearsals are on Sunday mornings after worship from 12:15 – 1:15 p.m. on the third floor of the Assembly Room. For additional information, please contact Rob Tracy, Director of Children's Music at: robdtracy@gmail.com or 410-207-7278.

HANDBELL CHOIR

Open to youth and adults. The choir rings at Sunday worship throughout the year as scheduled. Rehearsals are on Sunday mornings after worship from 12:15 – 1:30 p.m. in the labyrinth (sanctuary). For additional information, please contact Grace Maldarelli, Director of Handbells at: grace.maldarelli@gmail.com or 301-325-1265. Grace welcomes all regardless of ringing experience.

SOULFUL REVUE

A largely male ensemble specializing in sacred music with a gospel, jazz and blues flavor. Rehearsals are scheduled as needed in preparation for a summer worship service as well as special events throughout the year.

For additional information, please contact Taylor Branch at: mail@taylorbranch.com.

SOULFUL SISTERS

A newly formed women's ensemble also specializing in gospel and jazz as well as other musical forms. Rehearsals are scheduled as needed in preparation for a Sunday worship service or other events. For additional information, please contact: Kathy Graning at: kgraning@verizon.net or 410-243-5311.

BROWN INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

We welcome all those proficient on a particular

instrumental to share their musical gifts. This ensemble provides an opportunity for children, youth and adults to play together on special occasions, Sunday worship and other events. For additional information, please contact: Michael Britt at michael@browndowntown.org or 410-523-1542 #16.

AN INVITATION FROM THE GLOBAL MISSION COMMITTEE



The Global Mission Committee would like to welcome the congregation to join them in a small group study using the book and study guide *When Helping Hurts. (How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself)* It's not too late to join in the final two discussions:

Unit 3 – Understanding Why Good Intentions Are Not Enough – Sunday, February 8th

Unit 4 – Joining God's Work – Sunday, April 26th

Materials will be provided. Please mark your calendars with these dates and join us in the Church House after worship. Feel free to bring some food to share. Please contact Grace Peng if you have any questions: grace.cy.peng@gmail.com.

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 email 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.



REFLECTIONS ON MY WORK TRIP TO ISRAEL

BY TOM STEWART

I went to Israel as part of a delegation of senior congressional staff members who handle defense/foreign affairs issues to visit/tour Israel's borders (Gaza, the Golan Heights, the border with Lebanon, and the West Bank/East Jerusalem) and to meet civil and business leaders in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. I'm the Legislative Director for Rep. Elizabeth Esty, who represents Connecticut's 5th Congressional District.

Israel is an extraordinarily humbling place. There is a deep and universal connection to history and ritual shaped by historical contexts hundreds – and often thousands – of years older than any sense of identity most Americans possess. Anyone intent on affirming his or her preconceptions of the area and its people can

easily do so. However, my own preconceptions were pretty insufficient. That experience – of admitting that I could not relate to or fully understand the life and motivations of the people I met – was humbling.

But it was also gratifying because it reminded me of the importance of a major theme of our experience here at Brown: being in relationship with others. If you want to understand someone, build a relationship with him or her.

From a policy perspective, I was enormously frustrated. Whatever your views of policy in the region might be, you likely find the status quo unacceptable. Yet there are simply no easy answers to any of the problems most people are motivated to address. Yet in many ways I'm more hopeful now because of the people I met during the trip. The lesson for me is to remember to choose people over polemics.



Tiffany Series Concert Honors Our Own J. Spencer Hammond

Do you love African-American spirituals? Do the choral works of Brahms, Mendelssohn and Fauré transport you? You will hear both at a very special Tiffany Series CELEBRATION of “one of our own”—J. Spencer Hammond, who sings bass in the Chancel Choir. Spencer was Minister of Music at Douglas Memorial Community Church, serving with Rev. Marion Bascom for almost 40 years. His choirs were widely celebrated, and his men’s choir sang at the White House in the 1970s for President Nixon.

The concert, which will be presented – with love – by the Chancel Choir, is Sunday, February 22, 2015 at 3 p.m. Michael Britt and Tom Hall will conduct; Michael and John Walker will play the organ. The M.C. for the celebration will be Rev. Chester France, and the event will include short reminiscences by friends and admirers. A reception will follow.

The program, which Mr. Hammond chose, includes pieces by the great African American composers R. Nathaniel Dett, Undine Smith Moore, Wendell Whalum,

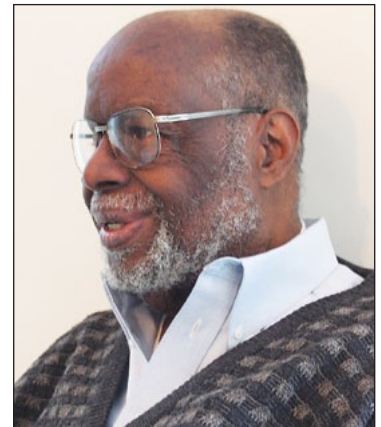
and Robert L. Morris.

Also on the program are selections from Brahms’ A German Requiem, and Mendelssohn’s St. Paul, as well as works by Fauré and Franck.

The concert’s concluding work will be Harry T. Burleigh’s “My Lord, What a Mornin,” which Spencer Hammond himself will conduct. Former

members of Mr. Hammond’s choirs at Douglas Memorial Community Church will join Brown Memorial’s Chancel Choir in singing this work.

Tickets are \$15 (\$5 for students) and are available at the door, after worship in the Assembly Room, and online at www.browndowntown.org.



J. Spencer Hammond

“ALL THE WORLD’S A STAGE”

BY ELLEN CARTER COOPER

In *As You Like It*, the character, Jacques, proclaims “All the world’s a stage. . .” Susan Stroupe believes this. In fact, her life could be the basis for a Lifetime bio movie. She was born into a long line of Presbyterian ministers, including her mother and father (Caroline Leach, recently retired Christian education minister and Nibs Stroupe).

Although Susan was born in Nashville, Tennessee, most of her young life was spent in Decatur, Georgia. Her parents were sent there to a dying church of 40 members (Oakhurst Presbyterian Church). By focusing on matters related to the LBGT community, racism, and injustice, the integrated church’s membership increased to 300 persons.

Because of the church community, Susan and her brother felt very comfortable relating to people of diverse backgrounds. They developed an understanding of what it means to be in the minority. This knowledge served her well when she migrated to St. Paul, Minnesota to attend Macalester College.

Originally drawn to the college by its liberal stance on education, Susan discovered that the area promoted a regional theater concept.

Susan took advantage of the many opportunities Macalester offered her as an English and theater major. One of those ventures was a semester of study in Cape Town, South Africa. After graduation, Susan worked for Americorps as an art teacher in Albuquerque and a puppeteer in New York State. Then she realized that she needed to expand her knowledge about her craft. This quest led her to Baltimore to study at Towson University where she earned an M.A. in theater arts. Additionally, Susan explored the fields of acting, directing, and playwriting.

John Tucker, Lynda Burton, and Hannah Murphy Buc are the links that



Susan Stroupe

prepared Susan’s entrance into the life of Brown Memorial. Susan recalled that on her first visit to the church in 2010 when Hannah was ordained as a deacon, she was impressed tremendously by Andrew’s sermon, the choir, and the sanctuary.

This multitasking young lady agrees with Shakespeare’s character’s idea of the presence of drama in every domain of life. She believes that theater and religion are closely joined. Her belief has been demonstrated in her coaching members in dramatic presentations, dancing in the light at Advent, and the Christmas pageant.

Currently, Susan is employed as an adjunct professor at the University of Baltimore, a teaching artist for Center Stage, and the director of *Mesmeric Revelations of Edgar Allan Poe*. The immersive theater drama about Poe will take place at the Historic Pratt House on March 26, 2015. Looking into the future, this busy thespian would like Brown Memorial members to explore “how we can integrate the arts into worship.” Susan Stroupe is an excellent candidate to lead the church in this effort.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



02/03 Sarah B. Buikema
 02/03 Cameron Lorch-Liebel
 02/04 June Fletcher-Hill
 02/05 Annie Bishai
 02/05 Emily Brown
 02/07 Benjamin Hand
 02/07 Jonna Lazarus
 02/07 Dave Miller
 02/08 Barbara Christen
 02/10 Lila Xin Neblo McNabney
 02/11 Robert Smith
 02/12 Bob Babb
 02/13 Tom Hall
 02/14 Wallace Anderson
 02/14 Patrick Francis
 02/14 Allan Riorda
 02/16 Andrew Liang
 02/16 Tom Liebel

02/17 Charles Joseph Reichelt, III
 02/17 Chloe Willis
 02/18 Christy Macy
 02/19 Kensington "Kensi" Veatch
 02/21 Henry Floyd Crew
 02/22 Brian Schanbacher
 02/22 Kathryn Wagner
 02/23 Jake Dominic Cheseldine
 02/24 Monica Lemmon
 02/24 Phineas Schanbacher
 02/25 Susan Rogers
 02/26 Blythe Petit
 02/26 Steve St. Angelo
 02/28 David Nyweide

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.

GIFTS OF STOCK

The giving of Stocks or other Securities, which have appreciated in value, may 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

FEBRUARY 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 email at sharon@browndowntown.org.

THE TIDINGS



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BROWN MEMORIAL
 PARK AVENUE
 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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www.brownmemorialparkavenue.org

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Andrew Foster Connors, Senior Pastor.

Timothy Hughes, Associate Pastor.

Ellen Carter Cooper, Editor.

Laura McConnell, Graphic Designer.

Send contributions by the 15th of each month to **edccooper58@hotmail.com.**

FEBRUARY 2015 AT BMPA*

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| 1 FEBRUARY Meditation Circle 9:00 a.m. Education Hour, Choir Warm-Up 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m. Service of Worship 11:00 a.m. Youth Return from Winter Trip Handbell Choir Rehearsal 12:20 p.m.-1:20 p.m. | 2 Tiffany Committee Meeting 11:00 a.m. | 3 Membership Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. Mission Seminar 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. | 4 Midweek Bible Study 10:30 a.m. | 5 Meditation on the Hill AA Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.-8:45 p.m. | 6 Feasting in Faith 6:30 p.m. | 7 Fianngan Wedding 3:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. |
| 8 Meditation Circle 9:00 a.m. Education Hour, Choir Warm-Up 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m. Service of Worship 11:00 a.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal 12:20 p.m.-1:20 p.m. Global Mission Series 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m. | 9 Tiffany Committee Meeting 11:00 a.m. | 10 Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m. | 11 Midweek Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Mission Seminar 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. | 12 Meditation on the Hill AA Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.-8:45 p.m. | 13 Feasting in Faith 6:30 p.m. | 14 Fianngan Wedding 3:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. |
| 15 Meditation Circle 9:00 a.m. Education Hour, Choir Warm-Up 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m. Service of Worship 11:00 a.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal 12:20 p.m.-1:20 p.m. MICA Art Exhibit (Until 2/18) | 16 MICA Art Exhibit (Until 2/18) Tiffany Committee Meeting 11:00 a.m. | 17 Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m. MICA Art Exhibit (Until 2/18) Session Meeting 7:00 p.m. | 18 MICA Art Exhibit Midweek Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Ash Wednesday Service of Worship 7:00 p.m. Tutoring Commission Meeting 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. | 19 Prayer Shawl Ministry 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Meditation on the Hill AA Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.-8:45 p.m. | 20 | 21 |
| 22 Meditation Circle 9:00 a.m. Education Hour, Choir Warm-Up 9:45 a.m.-10:45 a.m. Service of Worship 11:00 a.m. Tiffany Series Concert honoring J. Spencer Hammond 3:00 p.m. | 23 | 24 Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m. | 25 Midweek Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Tri-Church Education 7:00 p.m. | 26 Meditation on the Hill AA Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.-8:45 p.m. | 27 Feasting in Faith 6:30 p.m. | 28 |
| 1 MARCH Meditation Circle 9:00 a.m. YOUTH SUNDAY Service of Worship 11:00 a.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal 12:20 p.m.-1:20 p.m. | 2 Tiffany Committee Meeting 11:00 a.m. | 3 Staff Meeting 10:00 a.m. | 4 Midweek Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Tri-Church Education 7:00 p.m. | 5 Meditation on the Hill AA Meeting 5:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m.-8:45 p.m. | 6 | 7 |
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* For a more detailed and up-to-date BMPA Calendar, please go to <http://www.mychurchevents.com/calendar/calendar.aspx>.