

Tidings

MAR/APR 2018

Small Groups Formation

by **Rachel Cunningham**
Christian Educator

Small Groups Round Two planning is underway. A group met Feb. 11 after worship to review feedback and make some determinations about how to move forward with the next iteration of our Small Groups Campaign.

A core planning team was formed that will brainstorm and strategize how best to form new groups with the goal of starting them in September at the beginning of the church year. Stay tuned for more information on how you can participate next fall.

Meanwhile, a few of the small groups that formed last fall continue to meet. Judy Jones shared the following message with the members of her group about what being part of her group has meant to her:

"On a personal note, I'd like to say that I thoroughly enjoyed our first evenings together. For newcomers to Brown, the small group experience gave Joyce [Edington] and me (and I know, others), a chance to meet new people and feel like a part of the church. The group itself has such a kind, warm spirit that promotes comfort and a willingness to speak right up. That says a lot."



LENT 2018: Stations of Faith

by **Andrew Foster Connors**, Senior Pastor

We often speak about faith as a journey. The metaphor implies movement—what you believed about God or your life or its meaning has likely changed, often many times along your lifespan. And those beliefs affect the choices that you make in the world—where you spend your time, who and how you love, and the places where you choose to say no in order to say yes. Most of our individual journeys are punctuated with storied events of consequence—experiences that have brought us clarity, or forks in the road that have defined important life choices: stations along the journey. This Lent we're calling them "Stations of Faith."



Stations of faith can also be understood in a different sense—one's social location in the world. Where I grew up, the family that raised me, the way I've been racialized, my gender, sexual orientation, disabilities I've experienced, education—all these things shape the way I see the world. In that way my own

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Lent 2018

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story offers multiple places of connection for others, but also places of difference and dislocation. My story is both reflective of the overall human experience, and unique to me.

One of the joys of being in a faith community is sharing and receiving those stories with others. There are many places in our church where this occurs—from the small groups in the fall to the "Let's Talk" lunch that took place on Feb. 18. From the new members classes, to the new officers training that requires each new officer to share his or her faith journey with others. From the Sunday School classes, to the youth trips to Montreat and El Salvador. There is power in these stories—they define who we are.

Many of our stories contain experiences of struggle, loss, triumph, grief, death and new life. In that way they reflect the biblical narrative of the Israelites, Jesus and his disciples, and the early church. The early church even punctuated part of Lent with "stations of the cross," emphasizing the significance of Jesus's journey of suffering to his death. In telling these stories, we connect with the very experience of God.

There are many ways for us to tell the story of faith—

perhaps we ought to say "stories of faith." In worship during Lent, we'll be asking individuals to take a risk and share a story from their own faith journey. I have no idea how this will turn out, largely because I don't know what stories people will choose to tell. But I do know that every time a sister or brother in faith shares the story of their faith from their own station and their own perspective, I learn more about my own. Often I am inspired, surprised, engaged and moved by the resiliency of people, and the gift that it is to be alive. Ultimately, I stand in awe that despite the turmoil of our world and our lives, grace and love, forgiveness and generosity, hope and justice continue to be hewn from the better angels of ourselves. This is what strengthens my faith in God. I hope it will strengthen yours, too. ♦



andrew@browndowntown.org



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Associate Pastor Search

Help Spread the Word

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee is hard at work on filling our vacant Associate Pastor position. They recently completed the Ministry Information Form—the form that describes the position and the church—and it has been approved by Session and the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry. The form is now on the Presbyterian Church Leadership Connection website—clc.pcusa.org/OpportunitySearch.aspx— where Personal Information Forms (applications) may be submitted. You may help by spreading the word about the position and directing interested candidates to the CLC web site for more information. Please continue to keep the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee in your prayers as they continue their work.





Lenten Activities & Worship Services

Ecumenical Worship Services Wednesdays through March 28 at Noon Memorial Episcopal Church 1407 Bolton Street

Attend mid-week Lenten worship with our brothers and sisters across West Baltimore, a tradition started by the late Rev. Marion Bascom after the '68 Baltimore Riots. Lunch will be served following each service. Free will offerings are gratefully appreciated.

Tri-Church Education Series "Our Churches: Past, Present and Future" Wednesdays March 7, 14 and 21 Memorial Episcopal Church 1407 Bolton Street Dinner 6:30 pm, Service 7-8 pm

The three churches in Bolton Hill—Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian, Memorial Episcopal and Corpus Christi Catholic Church—have worshiped and studied together for many years, but most of us know little about the history of each of our congregations, our relationship to city and culture, and the defining moments in each of our communities of faith. Join us as we delve into the history of each of our congregations and how that

history has shaped the theological outlook, communal ethos and shared faith of our churches. A light soup and salad dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. Program begins at 7 p.m. The event is co-sponsored by Brown Memorial, Memorial Episcopal Church and Corpus Christi.

Weekly Prayer Opportunities Prayer Service Thursdays through March 22 at 5:30 pm

As you move from the busyness of your day into evening activities, you are invited to step apart from that busyness and join others in prayer. Within a liturgical framework, we bring forth spoken and silent

prayers from the church's ongoing prayer list, from prayer request cards, and from the deepest parts of our hearts.

Bible Study Lenten Discussion Wednesdays, 10:30 am

The Wednesday Bible Study is studying Walter Brueggemann's daily devotional "Gift & Task" during Lent. Others are invited to join in the Church House. Contact Rachel Cunningham (rachel@browndowntown.org) for a copy. ♦


 **For more information, call 410-523-1542, email info@browndowntown.org, or visit browndowntown.org.**



PHOTO BY: FRED GORMAN



Holy Week Activities & Worship Services

Palm Sunday Branches & Brunch Sunday, March 25

We gather with our friends from Corpus Christi Catholic Church and Memorial Episcopal Church for an annual neighborhood Palm Procession. Meet in the park on Park Avenue just north of McMechen Street at the fountain at 9:45 a.m. Our traditional education hour will not take place this Sunday. Instead, enjoy a pre-worship brunch in the sanctuary after the parade. Worship is at 11 a.m.

"Palm Sunday" Night Live Sunday, March 25, 5:30 – 8 pm

Our monthly gathering for middle and high school youth will focus on the events of Holy Week. Join us at Memorial Episcopal for dinner, games and conversation.

Taize & Tap Tuesday, March 27, 7 pm

We will hold a service of prayer featuring music from the Taize community and periods of silence. Following this service we invite you to join us for our monthly Theology on Tap gathering at the Brass Tap (1205 W. Mt. Royal Ave.) where we'll discuss Holy Week and its impact on our walk towards the cross.

Maunday Thursday Contemplative Worship & Communion Service

March 29, 5:30–7:30 pm

The Sanctuary will open at 5:30 p.m. for an hour of contemplative worship experiences, followed by a simple communion service at 6:30 p.m. Worship stations will remain open until choir rehearsal begins at 7:30 p.m. Childcare for infants and toddlers is available for this service upon request. Please contact Rachel Cunningham if you need childcare (rachel@browndowntown.org).

Good Friday Tenebrae Service Friday, March 30, 7:30 pm

This is an opportunity to sit with the growing darkness of Jesus' arrest, condemnation and execution. The word "tenebrae" is Latin for darkness or shadows, and this is reflected in a service that progresses from dim light to total darkness amid prayer, music and waiting for the light of Easter Sunday. (Note: the darkness of this service may be unsettling to some young children.)

Easter Decorating Saturday, March 31 10 am – Noon

We will decorate the sanctuary in preparation for Easter and would

love to have you join us. We will work from 10 a.m. to noon and invite you to come and help turn our sacred space into a spring garden.

Easter Sunrise Service Sunday, April 1, 6:30 am

It's become a tradition to gather with Light Street Presbyterian Church for a sunrise service in Federal Hill. The sight of daylight breaking over Baltimore City is a spectacular backdrop to a simple service of witness to Christ's resurrection. Anyone who wishes is welcome to gather in Federal Hill Park at 6:30 a.m. for songs, liturgy, prayers and good news. Breakfast at Light Street Presbyterian Church follows.

Easter Sunday, April 1, 11 am

We will joyfully celebrate the resurrection in community. The education hour will not take place on Easter Sunday but will resume the following week. Childcare for infants and toddlers is available. Join us for light refreshments following worship. ♦

Session News & Notes

submitted by Laura Urban, Co-Clerk of Session

The Session took the following actions or received these reports since the previous *Tidings* issue:

■ Construction update from Construction Team:

The cost for South Tower repairs will be \$237,846. As previously agreed on by Session (prior to the start of the Capital Campaign), the endowment will pay for half that cost. Final costs of the full project are not yet available (as of January meeting), but are expected to exceed the \$1.2M pledged. The Team has worked to bring down project costs by choosing simple designs and finishes, without reducing the project's scope. Session agreed the full project should proceed.

■ Pew removal for wheelchairs: Betsy Nix reported the Trustees have removed two short pews on the north side of the main floor to create space for wheelchairs. Chairs will be added for companions to use. This is a no-cost solution, which will be evaluated to see if this addresses the need without "cutting" the pews.

■ Endorsed the balanced budget presented by staff, based on estimated income of \$1,049,960. Because the Investment Policy requires Session to approve any withdrawal from the Endowment beyond 5 percent of the value, Session authorized "extra draws" as budgeted (\$135,000).

■ Received a Stewardship report, noting that we had received 128 pledges as of the January meeting, including 12 new pledges and many increases to previous pledges.

■ Endorsed the Personnel Committee's recommendation to approve 6 percent increase in compensation for the Senior Pastor. (The congregation approved this increase at the January congregational meeting.)

■ Received an updated Personnel Policy for church staff prepared by Rev. Foster Connors and the Personnel Committee.

■ Reviewed internal process weaknesses (identified by the financial review earlier this year). While there is no evidence of impropriety with the finances, more segregation of duties is needed in the financial office (e.g., accounting and deposit functions handled by two people, not one). Treasurer David Nyweide is working on creat-



Andrew Foster Connors gives the State of the Church address during the annual Congregational Meeting, Jan. 21.

ing a new process to correct the weaknesses.

■ Reviewed a background paper written by a Session subcommittee on "Church Growth and Endowment Spending." The paper gives future Session members historical context and understanding of the future plans for the limited use of the church endowment to help support the annual budget. (This paper is available for members to read, if interested. Please email Laura Urban, lsurban@sbcglobal.net, or David Bielenberg, dbielenberg@verizon.net, to request a copy.)

■ Three elders (Elizabeth Reichelt, Kelsie Riegel Morgan and Liz Bowie Fesperman) are part of a new "BMPA/Light Street Vision Team" with Rev. Tim Hughes Williams and Light St. Presbyterian lay leaders to consider possibilities of how Brown Memorial could collaborate with Light St. on ministry projects.

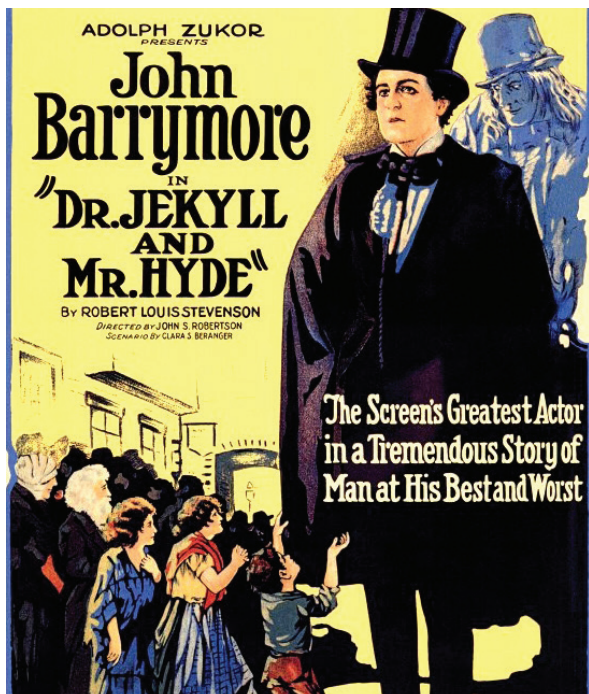
■ Voted to support a statement condemning capital punishment, to be presented at the Presbyterian General Assembly in June by the Greater Atlanta Presbytery.

■ Voted to sign a petition on behalf of the congregation to support the Maryland Clean Energy Jobs Initiative, as requested by the Brown Green Team.

■ Approved a request by Chrystie Adams to request a \$1,950 grant from "In the Loop" Ministry Fund of the Presbytery to fund expenses for Choir Camp and Soaring Eagles Camp at Eutaw Marshburn Elementary/Middle in summer 2018. ♦

Music Notes

Don't Miss Upcoming Events This Spring



Silent Film & Organ Concert

On **March 9 at 7:30 p.m.**, enjoy a silent film classic in the sanctuary—the 1920 film "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" starring John Barrymore. An original organ score by our Minister of Music, Michael Britt, will accompany the film. Come hear our Skinner pipe organ become a "Mighty Wurlitzer!"

Admission is by suggested donation at the door—\$15 for adults and \$25 for families. All proceeds benefit Brown Memorial's Capital Campaign that is raising funds for the church's Fellowship Building renovations.

Michael Britt regularly accompanies silent film viewings at Brown Memorial and nationwide. Outside of Brown Memorial, he is the house organist at the Weinberg Center for the Arts in Frederick, Md., which houses Maryland's only theater organ (a Wurlitzer) in its original installation.

Michael describes his approach to playing theater organ: "The important thing to remember as a silent film accompanist is not to dominate the film. The music is there to musically support the actions on the screen and not to

be a distraction. The highest compliment I can receive is when someone says that after five minutes, 'We forgot you were there playing!'"

Tiffany Series: Carol Williams

Organist Carol Williams will perform for the Tiffany Series on **April 15 at 3 p.m.** in the Sanctuary.

British born Williams' performances have taken her all over the world, to venues that include Paris's Cathedral of Notre Dame and the Church of St. Sulpice, London's Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral, and King's College, Cambridge, as well as Yale, Harvard, St. Patrick's Cathedral, and The Riverside Church in the United States. She played the inaugural recitals on the newly installed organ in Beijing's Forbidden City Concert Hall.

Williams is especially popular in California, where from 2001-2016 she served as San Diego Civic Organist, playing a huge outdoor Spreckels organ in all kinds of weather. Defying stereotypes, she presents concerts of great genre diversity, elegance, and charismatic humor that appeal to a wide audience.

Williams is a regular radio broadcaster and hosts the video series Tour Bus, which features pipe organs around the world. She was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of her contribution to music.

Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the door or online at browndowntown.org/tiffany-series. ♦



Youth News

MARCH 4, 11 AM

Youth Sunday

Worship will be led entirely by our high school students, following weeks of discussion and preparation. Youth, please set aside Friday, March 2, from 5-7p.m., for a full rehearsal of the service.

APRIL 7, 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Canoe Trip

The Brown Green Team is taking a canoe trip on the Susquehanna River with guides from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. This day-long experience will introduce participants to the majesty and complexity of the Susquehanna watershed, the main fresh-water trunk line of the Chesapeake. Among many other things, participants will explore: beautiful islands and wildlife (including bald eagles and great blue herons); hydroelectric dams; and myriad other interconnected issues that directly affect the Chesapeake Bay. We will have room for about 25 participants. The trip is fully funded by a grant from Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, and is free.

JUNE 16-25

El Salvador Mission

There is still time to join the youth mission trip to El Salvador, led by Andrew Foster Connors and Barbara Cook. The cost is approximately \$1,600, with opportunities to fundraise. Contact Andrew, andrew@browndowntown.org, or Barbara, bawijobe5@gmail.com, if interested.

JUNE 25-28

Soaring Eagles Learning Camp

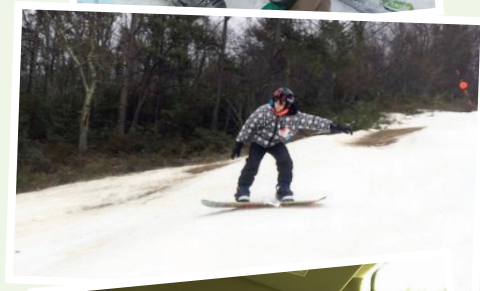
This summer learning camp is held each June at Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School in conjunction with The Center. Youth volunteers are needed. Contact Chrystie Adams at 410-744-6481 if interested.

JULY 28-AUG. 4

Baltimore Dakota Learning Camp

Adults, youth and families are needed to help with a learning camp with our Native American partners at the Pejuhutazizi Presbyterian Church in Granite Falls, MN. Contact Chrystie Adams (410-744-6481) or Rachel Cunningham (410-523-1542) if interested. Cost is \$450 plus airfare, with opportunities to fundraise. **Application with \$200 deposit is due by April 3.**

Winter Weekend Snapshots



Advocating for Smart Gun Technology

“Do not stand idly by while your neighbor’s blood is shed.” (Leviticus 19:16)

by Andrew Foster Connors

On Jan. 25, about 25 leaders from BUILD and I took part in a series of actions in support of Do Not Stand Idly By, a campaign organized by Metro IAF that is pushing mayors to take leadership on gun violence by pushing for gun manufacturer accountability and investment in smart gun technology. These actions took place while the US Conference of Mayors was meeting.

Metro IAF (Industrial Areas Foundation) is the parent organization of BUILD. It includes 22 organizations from 11 states up and down the east coast and to the Great Lakes region. Metro IAF is running campaigns, all of which have developed out of the communities that comprise these local institutions. Work includes immigration action and reform, criminal justice reform, jobs development, and Do Not Stand Idly By (DNSIB)—the gun safety work (donotstandidlyby.org).

The strategy of DNSIB is to organize the purchasing power of police departments and the U.S. military to hold gun manufacturers more accountable for the more than 30,000 gun deaths every year. The military, together with police departments, make up 40 percent of all annual gun purchases.

On Jan. 25, 16 different teams of leaders from all of our organizations took place in coordinated actions including:

- meeting with key Congressional allies,
- meeting with the Consumer Product Safety Commission,
- meeting with key mayors of the 120 who have signed onto our campaign from across the country, demonstrating new gun safety technology,
- meeting with military family organizations to bring greater pressure to the military to get active in this area,
- meeting with the owner of REALCO guns, one of the worst offenders of illegal guns ending up on the streets, located in Prince George’s County, and



PHOTO BY: DAVID F. CHOY

Andrew Foster Connors stands with other leaders who traveled to DC to support the Do Not Stand Idly By campaign.

- demonstrating new gun technology.

During the event, I joined three other clergy (two pastors and one rabbi) from CONECT, BUILD's sister organization in Connecticut. Both of Connecticut's Senators were early adopters of our campaign. Toni Harp, the mayor of New Haven, spoke at our action as she continues to bring new mayors to sign onto the effort. Recently, Eric Garcetti, the mayor of Los Angeles, announced his support.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) strategy grows out of the unwillingness of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to regulate the bump stocks used in the Las Vegas massacre. The ATF says that since a bump stock is not a gun or ammunition, it is not under their jurisdiction. We have key congressional allies bringing pressure to the ATF and to the Hill on this point. At the same time, we explored the possibility of the CPSC regulating it since they are charged with regulating unsafe products in the markets. They were reluctant and we learned we would need to "shame" them (using their words) into this approach.

The longer I live the more I'm not surprised to hear people asking us to shame them into doing their jobs well.

Police departments (including Baltimore's) have expressed strong interest in the new gun technology which includes fingerprint identification to allow only the owner of the weapon to fire it. The gun companies have historically opposed this, just as cigarette companies opposed new technology in their markets. They are afraid safer options will lead to requirements, which would negatively impact bottom lines. Police officers and military people want to see more options, as do many consumers.

The biggest win for me for the day was in developing deeper relationships with pastors from other organizations. This is key in my mind if we want to build national power on these efforts. I would encourage other key leaders at Brown to think about what level of involvement you would want to have in the future on this issue. There was a good mix of lay and clergy leadership on Jan. 25, but the clergy numbers were higher.

Finally, the stories shared that day were so powerful and demonstrated unity of terrible suffering across urban and rural areas. One rabbi told of the murder of his father 20 years ago by someone with an illegal gun. A lay leader told of being shot as a 3-year-old by her 3-year-old friend. Fortunately, she recovered but many have died in these situations.

The mayor of New Haven told the story of her one friend in school (she was the only African-American in a class full of white students) who was shot and killed as an 8-year-old by another 8 year-old playing with a gun. So, the power was in the stories.

As this *Tidings* is about to go to print, we are learning more about the most recent mass shooting in Florida. I am encouraged by the voices of young people who understand that while no one public policy angle can address all the issues that contribute toward gun violence, there are many actions that policy makers can take to reduce the number of gun deaths in our country. I look forward to learning new ways that we can take seriously the biblical admonition to "Do not stand idly by while your neighbor's blood is shed." (Leviticus 19:16) ♦

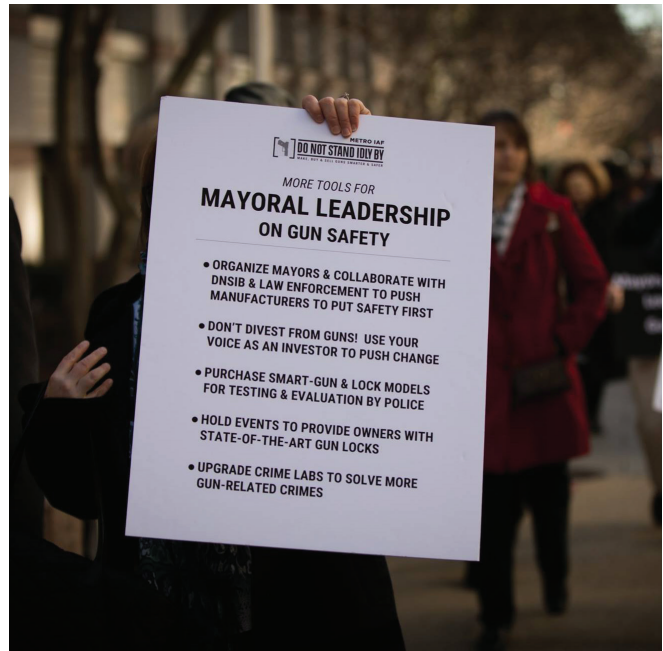


PHOTO BY: DAVID F. CHOY

“The biggest win for me for the day was in developing deeper relationships with pastors from other organizations. This is key in my mind if we want to build national power on these efforts.”

- Andrew Foster Connors

Tutor Profile: Agnes Lafferty

Tutoring 50+ Years and Still Going...

by Rob Kasper

On a recent wintry Monday afternoon, Agnes Lafferty sat in a corner of the Brown Memorial Tutoring Program classroom in Bolton Hill putting 11-year-old Janya Simms through her paces. They worked on building vocabulary. “What does comet mean?” Agnes asked. Next she quizzed the girl on story sequence, “What happens first? What happens next?” Agnes worked with the ease and confidence of someone familiar with the routine. She should be. She has been doing this work, tutoring Baltimore students in reading and writing, for 51 years.

It started back in 1967 when an acquaintance in her Towson neighborhood told her about the Brown Memorial Tutoring Program, a program that pairs adult volunteers with struggling students from four Baltimore elementary schools.

“I was fascinated with phonics,” she recalled. “I had no idea how I learned to read, I just did.”

After attending an orientation session conducted by experienced tutors, she thought she “would give it a try.”

So began what would become more than a half century of tutoring at Brown Memorial. At first she sandwiched her tutoring sessions around her part-time job as a lab technician at University Hospital. When children—Kathleen, Mark and Jenny—arrived in the Lafferty household she improvised. When her children were preschoolers she

took them with her to Bolton Hill, handing them off to a babysitter at the church. Later when the children were school-age, she scheduled tutoring sessions in the mornings so she could be home in the afternoons.

Now a 78-year-old grandmother of four, she tutors one afternoon a week, driving down from Towson, parking her Volvo on the street, and climbing the 40 steps to the third floor of the Church House, the temporary residence of the tutoring program while space in the neighboring Fellowship Building is being renovated.

A tall woman with a slight hitch in her gait, a result Agnes said of two knee and one hip replacement surgeries, she demurs from sitting down on the floor cross-legged with students at the beginning and end of each tutoring session. “I can’t kneel,”



she said, with a note of irritation in her voice. Her spirit, however, is strong.

As Agnes sat next to Janya, a 5th grader at Baltimore’s Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School, the twosome, one with graying hair, the other with dreadlocks, worked at a steady pace, taking turns reading passages from selected workbooks designed to build fluency. As Agnes read she placed her finger on each word, a technique that helped Janya focus on the printed material. When they encountered a word, such as “probe” that Janya was unfamiliar with, Agnes explained, “it means to explore.” When a story they were

reading mentioned Japan, Agnes paused and had her charge find Japan on a map taped to the wall above them.

“Kids like to learn,” Agnes said. “The big thing here is to be able to work one-on-one with a student. The classroom teacher has, what, 35 kids in the room and can’t possibly address every child’s learning problems. But with one-on-one and with help from Martha and Amy [program directors Martha Socolar and Amy Munds] and when you have been doing this for years and years, you figure things out.”

The benefits of the work she said are twofold, some for the students some for the tutors.

“The only way kids are going to get a job and be self-sufficient is if you can read and understand things.” She added “I get a lot out of it. I feel good that hopefully I can

help somebody make progress.”

Over the years Agnes has experienced changes in the tutoring program. Gone, felled by logistics, are the Saturday outings that tutors once arranged to take students to the post office, Cylburn Arboretum and Fort McHenry. Gone as well is the baby-sitting arrangement that tutoring mothers once needed.

“The materials we use now are much nicer than when I started, but it is all phonics” and all based on the Orton-Gillingham instructional approach, Agnes said.

On the horizon she is looking forward next year to working in the renovated Fellowship Building. “It is going to have an elevator,” she said, adding that she plans to take it rather than battle the steps, all “34 of them.”

When pressed to estimate how many students she has tutored in

the past 51 years, Agnes declined to guess. She has worked with some students for multiple years, she explained, others for a year or two.

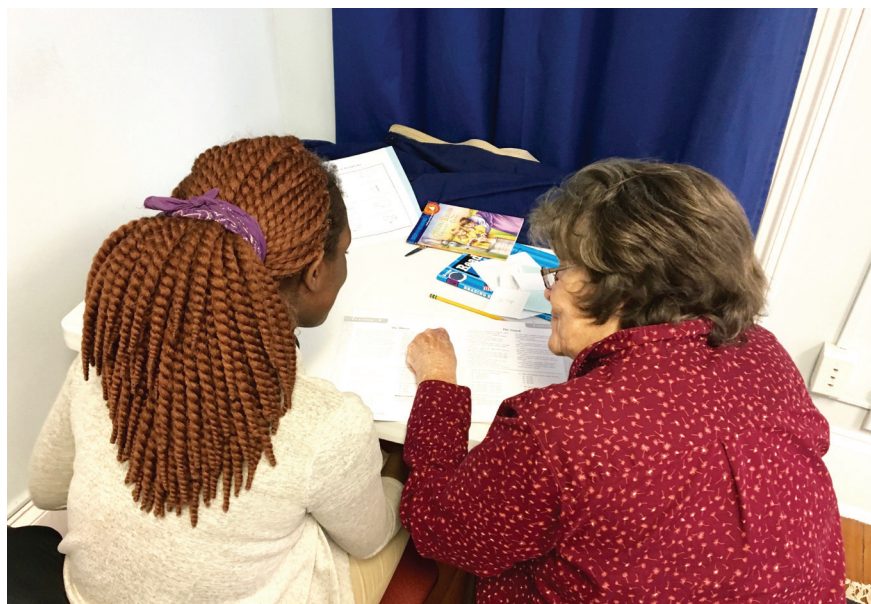
She acknowledged occasional disappointments. For example, over the years she has worked with a few promising students only to have them drop out of the tutoring program when their families suddenly moved.

But she has success stories as well. There was the little girl who came to Agnes as a home-schooled third grader virtually unable to read. Now a graduate of the tutoring program and an accomplished eighth grader, the girl has penned notes to Agnes, among them the girl’s goal to eventually land a job at the Central Intelligence Agency.

Then there is Larry Rice, a man who, while making a delivery to Brown Memorial, paused to ask a question.

Larry said that as a boy he used to come to Brown Memorial for tutoring and wondered if “Mrs. Lafferty was still here.”

Indeed she was, and is. ♦



Urban Witness Committee Report

The Opioid Crisis: We Can Be Part of the Solution

by Lynda Burton

The opioid crisis in the U.S. has grown into a mammoth problem: More deaths per year from opioids (narcotics) occur each year than in all the years of the Vietnam War: 66,000 versus 59,000; Life expectancy in the U.S. has fallen for the first time in decades and experts attribute this to opioid deaths. Nearly everyone is susceptible to addiction. Though there are a wide array of underlying causes, many at a societal and national level beyond our reach, the Urban Witness group has accepted that we as a church have a role in contributing to solutions.

Opioid addiction is a chronic disease and requires careful and ongoing professional treatment. We have learned that experts believe that a major cause of opioid addiction is from prescription narcotics given for short-term pain control such as after surgery, an acute painful medical condition, or an injury. Using opioids even for a week can addict an individual.

What can each one of us do to help solve this epidemic? Most importantly, discuss with your health care provider how best to control pain. Pain management experts suggest that opioids are not always necessary and non-opioid analgesics and topical treatments such as cold or counterirritants can help.

If opioids are felt to be necessary, ask that only a few day's supply be prescribed. Once pain is reduced to a more tolerable level, dispose of unused opioids immediately, following guidelines. This is important as studies have shown unused narcotics left in the home are used by other

household members, visitors or workers. According to a national survey on drug use and health, nearly 68 percent of those who used prescription pain relievers non-medically in 2012-2013 got them from friends or relatives.

Patients with malignant pain or those in hospice care may need long-term opioids and larger supplies of narcotics will be necessary. However, experts believe the vast majority of addiction comes from short-term use of opioids for transient pain from injury or surgery. Several easily accessible methods of safe disposal are available. Use the secure drop box located in your district police station, open 24/7. No questions asked. No sign in. No identification needed. Or, have disposal bags mailed to you (see page 13). The Church may purchase these pouches to be available to members.

Future actions under discussion by the group include:

■ Build a replication model for use in other faith communities based on



our experience with education about the possible dangers of prescription opioids and alternative pain treatment.

■ Organize and/or participate in a community-wide meeting to further education about the incipient opioid problem, featuring well known speakers who are experts in the area such as Leana Wen, Baltimore City's Health Commissioner (see page 13).

■ Coordinate our church work with BUILD in their developing focus on addiction.

■ Support a program such as Families Anonymous—a lay leader 12 step program for family members or friends of those with or suspected of becoming addicted work with neighborhoods that have a concentration of treatment centers to balance these centers geographically.

We need your ideas and energy to continue this work. Please join us. Coming meetings will be announced in the bulletin.

Perhaps, most importantly, support our church programs that work to alleviate societal problems that increase stress, increasing the risk of addiction to either alcohol or narcotics. A study by the Kaiser Foundation, based on survey responses of over 17,000 members of their HMO, yields powerful evidence that the stressors on children accumulate and contribute to future problems.

Respondents were asked about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). The findings showed a dose response correlation with the number of adverse health events as adults, including addiction to alcohol and illicit drugs. ♦

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Drug Deactivation Pouches

Several companies provide these disposal pouches. Use an Internet search on “Mallinckrodt” Pharmaceutical Company which has a form for physician’s offices or lay persons to fill out to receive six pouches at no charge. The sealable pouch contains active carbon, which, when water is added, deactivates the drug. The



pouch can then be safely disposed of in household garbage. Walmart has announced that pouches will be distributed on request when a prescription for an opioid is filled. Amazon lists several companies that have the pouches. Some local pharmacies have these pouches.

A synopsis of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study design, questionnaires, and findings can be found on the Internet—“ACE study.”

A graphic of the mechanism by which adverse childhood experiences influence health and well-being throughout the lifespan shows: adverse childhood experiences leading to disrupted neurodevelopment, which leads to social, emotional and cognitive impairment, then adoption of health risk behaviors, disease, disability and social problems, and ultimately early death.

Safe disposal for opioids at all district police stations, including:

Northern District
2201 W. Coldspring Lane
410-396-2455

Northwest District
5271 Reisterstown Rd.
410-396-2466

Central
500 E. Baltimore St.
410-396-2411

UPCOMING EVENT: MARCH 18, 12:30 PM

Lunch and Discussion with Dr. Leana Wen, Commissioner of the Baltimore City Health Department

Over lunch following worship, Dr. Wen and Andrew Foster Connors will discuss ways Brown Memorial, as a faith community, can help alleviate suffering due to the opioid crisis.



March Birthdays

03/04	Annie Obrecht
03/04	Sue Schindler
03/06	Ryan Artes
03/07	Rosa Brown
03/07	Tida Nelson
03/07	Edna Watts
03/08	Aidan Connors
03/11	Rees Richardson
03/11	Dianne Ross
03/13	Joanne Egan
03/14	Ken Mills
03/15	Ellen Edrington
03/15	Liam McConnell
03/15	Don Peoples
03/16	Jonathan Barnes
03/17	Chel Cavallon
03/18	Alex Illum
03/19	Martha Bishai
03/19	Sarah Diehl
03/20	Nick Reed
03/21	Ellison Warmath
03/22	Melissa Riorda
03/23	Ben Bobango
03/23	Nell Robinson
03/23	Stephen Ruckman
03/23	Sarah Seipp-Williams
03/26	Kenna Mitchell
03/26	Carol Newill
03/26	Rick Thomas
03/27	Olivia Liang
03/29	Erin Anderson
03/29	Olivia Babb
03/29	David Lascu



To have your birthday listed in the Tidings, contact Sharon Holley, church secretary, 410-523-1542, or Sharon@brown-downtown.org.

Brown Beyond Park Avenue

Sharing the Good News on Facebook

by Jennifer Michael, Communications Manager

In this technology driven age, churches have been given the gift of reaching more people in more ways than ever before. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are providing a whole new way to share the gospel, foster community and encourage people to get involved in church.

A growing body of literature and resources is emerging for churches about how best to minister to and take advantage of audiences on social media. Meredith Gould in her book, “The Social Media Gospel,” explains, “Social media provides a means for sharing faith as well as modeling Christian life beyond the building we call church.”

She uses examples of how social media can help churches, including: educate newcomers about your church community; gather feedback from congregants; minister to the homebound and those unable to attend; organize, publicize and invite people to events; preach the Gospel; and share stories to deepen faith and inspire action.

Author Natchi Lazarus in his book, “The Connected Church,” asks the question, “What if Jesus Christ was on social media?” He hypothesizes that Jesus “*would want to get on social media every day and bless people with value-added messages and Bible-based teachings, edifying them and encouraging them with the principles of the Word of God. Just like in Jesus’ time, when thousands of people gathered in marketplaces, today billions of people virtually gather in electronic marketplaces using their mobile devices and social media apps. We as ministers need to be in the midst of them. If we do that, then we are modelling our ministry after Jesus. And when you do that over a period of time, you will see your church buildings and conferences fill up for each event and gathering. It’s time to start thinking differently about reaching people.*”

Brown Memorial has had a public Facebook page since 2011, found at facebook.com/BrownDownTownBaltimore, and it has accumulated nearly 400 followers. Many of the page's followers are you—members and active friends—but many others have never actually stepped inside the church, but yet are interested in the Brown church community.

Brown's Facebook page isn't just a means for the church staff to communicate messages to this interested audience. It's also a powerful tool for you to use to help share and spread the word about the Brown community. Ways you can interact on Brown's Facebook page, if you have a Facebook account, include:

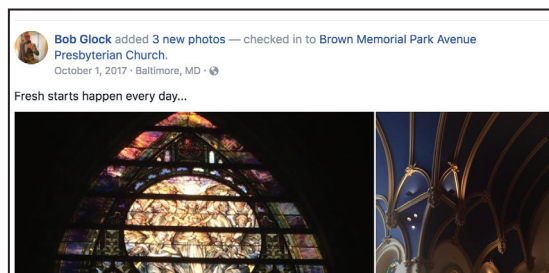
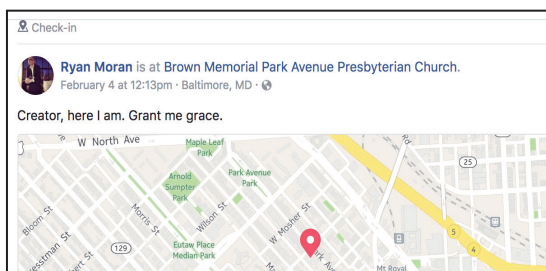
- "liking" and following the page,
- "checking in" to the page,
- sharing our posts,
- interacting with our posts by “liking” or commenting, and
- RSVPing to and sharing our Facebook events.

The following are examples of how members and friends have used Facebook to spotlight Brown Memorial:



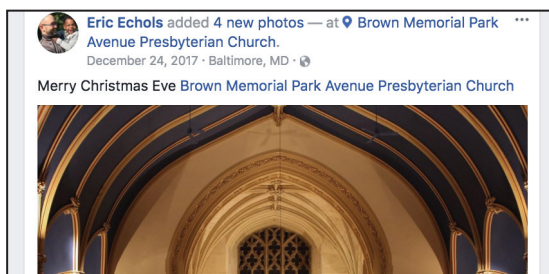
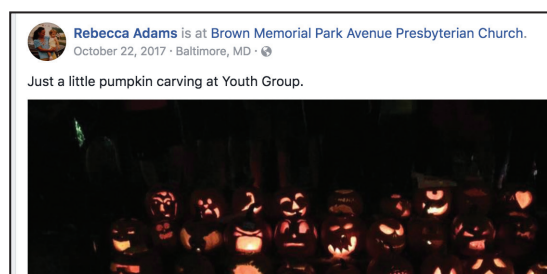
When we changed our Facebook cover photo to the church's "Immigrants and Refugees Welcome" banner, Hannah Murphy Buc shared the photo with her Facebook friends and explained what it meant to her.

Ryan Moran used Facebook to "check in" to Brown Memorial on a recent Sunday, showing our location on the map.



Bob Glock used Facebook to check in to Brown Memorial by sharing photos of the Tiffany windows he snapped while attending church.

Rebecca Adams took a photo during Sunday Night Live and shared it on her Facebook page while checking in at the church.



Eric Echols took photos from his audio engineer's seat in the balcony on Christmas Eve and shared the photos with his Facebook friends.

In the next issue of the Tidings we will share information about Brown Memorial's "closed" Facebook group—[facebook.com/groups/BrowndowntownBaltimore](https://www.facebook.com/groups/BrowndowntownBaltimore)—and how people in the Brown community can join the group and use it to communicate internally with other members and friends.



April Birthdays

- 04/03 Drew Johnston
- 04/03 Ruskin Nohe-Moren
- 04/05 Andy Johnston
- 04/06 Hannah Bobango
- 04/06 Shannon Bobango
- 04/06 Jim Schuman
- 04/07 George Bareford
- 04/07 Liz Bowie Fesperman
- 04/07 Jake Schindler
- 04/08 Rachel Aaron Smith
- 04/08 Larry Fletcher-Hill
- 04/09 Jim Williams
- 04/11 Sarah Egan
- 04/11 Will Egan
- 04/11 Lucille McCarthy
- 04/11 Jeanne Thomas
- 04/12 Ernest Imhoff
- 04/12 Grace Todd
- 04/13 James Cavallon
- 04/13 Annalisa Jenkins
- 04/15 Annika Brockman
- 04/15 Karoon Armand
- 04/17 April Flores
- 04/17 Kathy Graning
- 04/18 Dever Cunningham
- 04/19 Barbara Cates
- 04/19 Annie Schindler
- 04/20 Mary Mashburn
- 04/22 Greta Finney
- 04/22 Alex Hagen
- 04/24 Gareth Reiman
- 04/24 Ben Waldron
- 04/25 Red Finney
- 04/25 Clementine Hensley
- 04/25 Amy Kimball
- 04/26 Chloe Cheseldine
- 04/26 Kenna Emerick
- 04/27 Andrew Foster Connors
- 04/29 Freddie Courpas
- 04/29 Jean Savina
- 04/29 Dave Schmickel
- 04/30 Katie Egan



BMPA Calendar

*Alive in the City
and the World*

Meditation Circle, 9:45 a.m.
Education Hour, 9:45 a.m.
Worship, 11 a.m.

TEXT MESSAGE ALERTS

Keep your phone number **and carrier information** current in CCB to receive texts about last minute schedule changes.

Every Sunday, "MOTHRAA"
Meditation on the Hill Reading Alcoholics Anonymous, 6 p.m. Church House parlor. A meditation/AA big book study style meeting open to anyone, regardless if identifying as an alcoholic.

Every Wednesday, Bible Study, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Church House. Join us for this topical bible discussion.

Every Thursday, Prayer Service, 5:30-6:15 p.m. A time of prayer, worship and community in the Sanctuary.

Every Thursday, Meditation on the Hill, 5:30 p.m. Church House Parlor. An open Alcoholics Anonymous meeting.

Mar. 4, Youth Sunday, 11 a.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 7.*

Mar. 7, 14, 21, Tri-Church Education Series, 6:30-8 p.m. Memorial Episcopal. *Details page 3.*

Mar. 9, Silent Film and Organ Concert, 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details page 6.*

Mar. 15 & Apr. 19, Prayer Shawl Ministry, 1-3 p.m. Enjoy support and fellowship while making prayer shawls for those in need. March meeting is at Carol Graves' home and April at Dianne Ross's

home. Contact rossinbalt@verizon.net for more information.

Mar. 18, Lunch and Discussion with Dr. Leana Wen, Baltimore City Health Department Commissioner, 12:30 p.m. *Details on page 13.*

Mar. 25, Palm Sunday Branches & Brunch, 9:45 a.m. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 25, "Palm Sunday" Night Live, 5:30-8 p.m. Memorial Episcopal. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 27, Taize & Tap, 7 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 29, Maundy Thursday Contemplative Worship & Communion Service, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 30, Good Friday, Tenebrae Service, 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 31, Easter Decorating, 10 a.m.-noon. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Apr. 1, Easter Sunrise Service, 6:30 a.m. Federal Hill Park. *Details on page 4.*

Apr. 1, Easter, 11 a.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Apr. 7, Canoe Trip, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Susquehanna River. *Details on page 7.*

Apr. 15, Tiffany Series Organ Concert: Carol Williams, 3 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 6.*

Tidings

Good News from Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church

1316 Park Avenue,
Baltimore, MD, 21217.
410.523.1542.

browndowntown.org

Andrew Foster Connors,
Senior Pastor

Jennifer Michael,
Editor

Have an idea for something to include in the Tidings? Email Jennifer Michael, jmichael@browndowntown.org. Due dates this year: Apr. 10 (May/June/July issue), July 10, (Aug/Sept issue), Sept. 10 (Oct/Nov issue).

Sign up for our e-newsletter, This Week @ Brown, on the home page at browndowntown.org.



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[BrowndowntownBaltimore](https://www.facebook.com/BrowndowntownBaltimore)



**BROWN
MEMORIAL
PARK AVENUE**

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)