

# Tidings

SUMMER 2018

## Pastor's Reflections

**Rev. Andrew Foster Connors**  
Senior Pastor



As one who came to the Presbyterian Church as an adult, one of the things that attracted me was the

**balance between maintaining ideals of the faith without losing sight of real world challenges.**

A great example of that is in the way that we elect officers who lead us. Our form of government recognizes all leadership as initiated by God—a call to service. Yet unlike my Baptist upbringing, an inner sense of call is insufficient for leadership in the Presbyterian Church. It must be confirmed by the members of the Church itself. This obviously leads to all sorts of real world questions that are not easy to answer: If one's inner sense of call isn't enough, then who gets to decide?

In typical Presbyterian fashion, the architects of our form of government set up all kinds of checks and balances to guard against at least two kinds of sins: The tyranny of the majority on one hand, and the abuse of power by the few on the other. Without getting into the weeds (see the Presbyterian Church Book of Order if you like the weeds!), they



## Prayers for the Summer

We're sending youth and adult delegations out this summer on mission and faith formation trips. Please pray for their safe travel and meaningful ministry experiences.

### El Salvador (June 19-28):

Warner Brockman, Anna Connors, Barbara Cook, Andrew Foster Connors, Bea Guzman, Steedman Jenkins, Annie Schindler

### Pejuhutazizi Family Learning Camp (July 28-August 4):

Chrystie and Doug Adams, Karoon, Mehran and Yari Armand and Grace Peng, Dever, Evan and Rachel Cunningham, Julie Hanks, Bill, Laura and Liam McConnell, Ian Munds

### Montreat Youth Conference (July 29-August 4):

Rebecca Adams, Erin Bobango, Warner Brockman, Aidan and Anna Connors, Katie Egan, Adam Forward, Annalisa and Steedman Jenkins, Carolina Mills, Joseph Reichelt, Annie Schindler ♦

## — INSIDE —

**Summer at Brown.** Concerts, Tiffany tours and book discussions. See page 5.

**Opioid Discussion.** Dr. Leana Wen drew a crowd March 18. See page 8.

**Party With a Purpose.** Tutoring Program gets the spotlight. See page 12.

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## Pastor's Reflections

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basically required that all governing bodies (congregations, Presbyteries, etc.) make use of a nominating committee to ensure that the leadership is broadly representative of the congregation in all of its diversity, and that those nominated for service are “persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and the world.”

Even so, all kinds of ways are set up to guard against groups of individuals controlling the leadership process. The congregation can nominate individuals from the floor of the congregational meeting where officers are elected, but the Session must examine and approve officers elected for ordination (elders and deacons) to make sure they are fit for ministry. Rotating terms ensures that a Session is balanced between stability and change.

Our congregation follows this process. The nominating committee meets toward the end of the summer. It's made up of an elder, a deacon and four members elected from the congregation. Two of those members rotate on/off each year. The pastor serves as “ex-officio” with no vote. We look at who has completed their terms and who is available to “re-up” for a second term.

We talk about the diversity of the congregation and whether or not that diversity is represented on the Session. Diversity, in our context, includes race/ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, theological outlook and length of time in the congregation.

We hear from the different boards about their needs. The Trustees might need someone with particular expertise or aptitude in a project management area. The deacons might need someone with strong organizational skills. The Session might have individuals connected to particular ministries who are rotating off, etc. We walk through our directories brainstorming individuals. When


we finally ask individuals if they are willing to serve, we make sure that they are committed to the expectations of the positions.

All of this is wrapped in a process of prayer, whereby we ask for insight into that mystery of call that is never easy to decipher.

The current Session and nominating committee at Brown Memorial want to make this process as transparent as possible. Individuals within the congregation are welcome to suggest names to the nominating committee, including their own. This includes names of individuals for the nominating committee itself. The nominating committee takes these names and works them through this process of ensuring diversity, recognizing current needs, and making sure those we elect are individuals called to strengthen God's church in the world. To put it succinctly, anyone who is nominated must be willing to be the kind of community that we seek to create together.

Expect announcements inviting suggestions beginning sometime in August. Until then, you can always contact Mike Reed, chair of the nominating committee, or any current member of the committee (Rick Thomas [deacon liaison] Chel Cavallon, Sue Galusha-Bobango, Elden Schneider or Susan Stroupe) to share your thoughts, ideas, perspectives and names of people you believe could be called to service in our congregation in this time and place.

Above all, pray for those charged with the nominating process and for our entire congregation that the leaders we elect might be the leaders God calls to serve in this time and place. ♦

 [andrew@browndowntown.org](mailto:andrew@browndowntown.org)

 [@pulpit](https://twitter.com/pulpit)



### *Brown Beyond Sunday*

Youth and leaders from Brown put their faith in action and joined thousands in Washington, DC, recently to participate in the March For Our Lives to call an end to gun violence.

# Position Descriptions for Our Leaders

## ELDERS

Elders, together with the pastor, exercise leadership, government and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of the BMPA congregation, as well as the Presbyterian Church at large. Elders should be persons of faith, dedication and good judgment. Duties and expectations include:

- Meeting as a part of the Session, the church governing body, on at least a monthly basis. Currently the meetings are the second Wednesday of the month, 7-9 p.m.
- Leading in one other capacity at the church such as chairing one of BMPA's standing committees, leading a mission area of the church, or taking on special ad-hoc assignments
- Pledging a portion of your financial gifts to the church. Elders are expected to place a high priority on the church in their charitable giving, especially while serving on the Session.

## YOUTH ELDERS

Youth elders have the same authority and responsibility as other members of the Session. The only difference is the term of service. Youth elders serve a one-year term. While eligible for an additional term, the Session strives to open this opportunity to as many young people as possible, making additional terms the exception rather than the rule. Duties and expectations are similar, with some nuances:

- Monthly meeting—a youth voice and perspective at the table of church governance is critical in the Session's decision-making. Some youth struggle either with the schedule or with uncer-

tainty as to how to contribute in this environment. Elders and staff are flexible and supportive in helping young people find their voice.

- Leading—the youth elder(s) should serve as a voice of leadership to the rest of the youth, interpreting the decisions of church leadership and helping to shape youth programs, mission and activities at BMPA.

- Serving—Youth elders are expected to be involved in the worship, education and mission of the church.

## DEACONS

According to the Book of Order, “The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.” Duties and expectations include:

- Meeting approximately six times per year. Currently the deacons meet after church on Sunday about every other month.
- Ministering to at least one home-bound member by visiting or arranging the visiting of others at least once per month. Together as a group, deacons arrange these assignments on an annual basis. Deacons are free, indeed encouraged, to recruit others in the congregation to participate in this ministry.
- Serving as the first responders to

congregants who face illness or other unexpected crises.

- Arranging care for such congregants through arranging meals, etc.
- All deacons are assigned a portion of the alphabet to lower the chances for members of the congregation with needs going unnoticed.

## YOUTH DEACONS (S)

Several years ago the congregation opened up the possibility of a youth (or youths) serving as youth deacons. To date, the nominating committee has not identified youth with interest or availability for this role, but they remain open to it.

## TRUSTEES

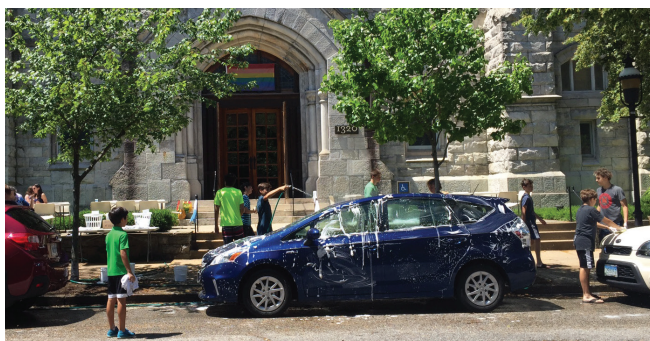
Trustees are responsible to receive, hold, encumber, manage and transfer property for the church, with all duties subject to the authority of the Session. Trustees should be selected from members who have been active in the life of the church. The trustees elect their own chair annually. Duties include:

- Overseeing physical plant issues (maintenance and repairs). Currently, trustees hold specific assignments for different areas of the church physical plant. Assignments are agreed upon annually under the chair's direction.
- Meeting approximately once/month.
- Counting and recording pledge contributions and plate collections. Currently, trustees rotate the responsibility so that each trustee counts about one time/month. Trustees may recruit others to fulfill this responsibility, but are responsible for arranging their own replacements when unable to count. ♦



# UPCOMING EVENTS

View our full calendar at [browndowntown.org](http://browndowntown.org).



## Fundraising for Mission Trips

Help make our summer mission trips possible in several ways: Take advantage of our **Parents Night Out, May 19, 6-10 p.m.** Parents can drop off their children, ages infant-4th grade, at the Church House for a night out. Youth and adult youth leaders will supervise games and activities. Cost is \$20 a child, with a discount available for three or more children. Pick up a registration form from church on Sunday. Email Rebecca Adams with questions—[readams86@gmail.com](mailto:readams86@gmail.com). We are also holding a **car wash, cookout and bake sale June 10, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** All donations welcome.



## Inquirer's Classes

Andrew Foster Connors is holding Inquirer's Classes, **May 6, 12:30-2:30 p.m.** and **May 19, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**, for anyone interested in church membership. The classes will include Presbyterian history and polity, Brown Memorial's history and missional commitments, plus the meaning of church membership, the way we organize ourselves as a church, and how to get involved. The classes take place on the first floor of the Church House. Let Andrew know if you are coming and which class you'd like to attend ([andrew@browndowntown.org](mailto:andrew@browndowntown.org)).

## Green Team Activities

The Chesapeake Bay Trust has awarded the Brown Green Team a \$2,500 grant to continue its coordination of environmental education and stewardship programs between the church and students at Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School. Among the projects the Green Team is developing:

- a church youth and adults canoe trip on the Susquehanna River with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, scheduled for Saturday, May 5;
- spring and fall field trips for church youth and Eutaw-Marshburn students with the Living Classrooms Foundation, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Robinson Nature Center (in Columbia, Md.);
- vegetable and pollinator garden construction and maintenance at Eutaw-Marshburn, with tentative work dates in April and May; and
- native tree planting and invasive species removal along the Jones Falls river corridor.

Contact McKay Jenkins, leader of the Green Team, at [mckay@udel.edu](mailto:mckay@udel.edu), if you can participate in these projects.



# SUMMER AT BROWN

**Sunday Worship at 10 a.m. No Education Hour.**



## Summer Schedule

Mark your calendars. We are switching to our summer schedule Memorial Day weekend. Worship will move to 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 27, through Sunday, September 2. Education classes will take a break during this time. Also, plan to enjoy cookies and lemonade after worship each Sunday during the summer.



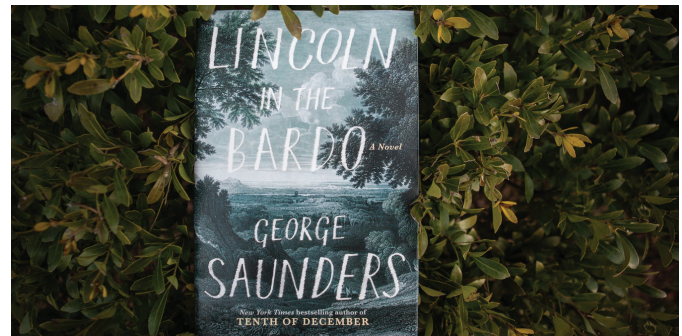
## Music on the Front Steps

Enjoy Wednesday hymn sings and lemonade at 6 p.m. on the church front steps, **June 6, July 4 (Independence Day) and August 1**. Hymn requests are played on a vintage reed organ. We are also holding a Friday Evening Summer Concert Series, with music scheduled on the church front steps **July 13 and 20 at 7 p.m. On July 6 at 7 p.m.**, view a classic silent film in the Sanctuary, with Michael Britt accompanying on the Skinner pipe organ.



## Artscape Weekend Activities

Jim Schuman will lead tours of our famous Tiffany windows to Artscape goers and members of our church. Tours take place **Saturday, July 21, at 9 a.m., and Sunday, July 22**, after worship. Worship on July 22 will take place at Trinity Baptist (1601 Druid Hill Ave.) as part of a combined worship service. Look for more details to come about this.



*Image from npr.org.*

## Paperback + Pastor

Join Andrew Foster Connors this summer for book discussions, 6:30-8:30 p.m., in the homes of church members on the following dates:

- Tues., June 12. "Lincoln in the Bardo," by George Saunders. Location: Home of Rachel Forward.
- Wed. July 18. Book and location TBA.
- Wed. Aug. 22. Book and location TBA.

Contact [andrew@browndowntown.org](mailto:andrew@browndowntown.org) for more information, or check the church calendar online.

# Tiffany Series Event May 6

by Shirley Parry

The Chancel Choir will perform Francis Poulenc's "Gloria," a reflective, sumptuous, spiritual—and highly unusual modern work—with Natanya Washer as soprano soloist, on Sunday, May 6, at 7:30 p.m. (note the time!). Renowned Princeton Chapel organist Eric Plutz will accompany the choir. Michael Britt will direct.



**P**oulenc wrote this piece in 1954 following the death of a friend, which made "the life of the spirit attract me anew," he said. Like the composer himself, it is filled with contradictions: "dapper and ungainly, wicked and pious, slipshod perfectionism," in composer Ned Rorem's words. What makes it fascinating—and great fun to sing—is its use of rhythm, which propels the unusual harmonies and creates a brilliant and very moving work.

Also on the program is Poulenc's "Piano Sonata for Four Hands," written in 1918 and characterized by jocular musical vitality. The rambunctious Prelude, the naïve and sentimental Rustique section, and the joyous Finale all show the influence of Stravinsky and Satie. We'll see how Michael Britt and Joseph Teter navigate the keyboard as they play this complicated work on a single piano.

Finally, Eric Plutz will perform Maurice Duruflé's "Prélude et fugue sur le nom d'Alain," a work written in tribute to his young friend and fellow organist and composer Jehan Alain (1911-1940). In the "Prélude," Duruflé quotes the theme of Alain's most famous work, "Litanies," and the fugue section's counterpoint ends in "a blaze of glory"—perhaps evoking his friend's heroism, which earned him a posthumous Croix de Guerre.

We hope you'll join us for this final Tiffany Series concert of the season. Tickets are \$20 (Patrons \$50), and are available following worship, at the door and online at [browndowntown.org/current-season](http://browndowntown.org/current-season). Students get free admission.

See you there! Vive la France! ♦

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## Interested in Joining a Small Group?

by Caroline Sell

We are excited to kick off our second round of Brown Memorial Small Groups this September! Small groups are a great way to build relationships within the Brown Memorial community and explore ways to integrate faith in daily life. In May, the planning team will send out a survey asking the congregation what small groups you might be

interested in. Current ideas include groups centered on the Outdoors and Spirituality, Art and the Holy Spirit, Stories and Brews, and Community Organizing 101. Do you have an idea for a group or would you be interested in being a group leader? Contact Gayle Barney at [traveltwins@aol.com](mailto:traveltwins@aol.com).



# 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:**

■ At the annual one-day Session retreat in February, elders began work on revising the summary of church goals, which was last written in 2015. (Many of the 2015 ideas have been implemented—like launching a new church website and beginning use of CCB for internal communication). Elders discussed the goals and asked, “Are we living out these goals? And what are the right goals for the next 3-5 years?” Elders also reviewed the compiled notes from the small group conversations held at the January congregational meeting.

■ A work group assembled a draft document of goals, which was reviewed by Session at the April meeting. The premise of the goal statement is that the life and work of the church is organized around four central relationships: 1) with one another, 2) with God, 3) with our place (or facilities), and 4) with our city and beyond. Staff will now review the document and consider how to build priorities and work plans. Session will revisit the goals in May, considering input from staff.

■ Authorized Treasurer (David Nyweide) to sign the contract with A.R. Marani (builders and contractors) for work on the Fellowship Hall, not to exceed \$1.5 million. Including the cost of the South Tower, the total capital project is expected to be about \$1.7 million. To date, we have received \$1.2 million in pledges, and collected 55 percent. (Session had previously authorized 50 percent of the tower repair costs be paid with endowment funds.) A line of credit has been secured to manage the cash flow and to complete the project. The Campaign Fundraising Team will reassemble to consider how best to launch a “last mile” campaign to finish the fund. Construction work is expected to begin in late April and take eight months to complete, with an end date of late December.

■ Approved Andrew’s request to submit a grant to the Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program to fund a proposed 16-week sabbatical project in summer 2019. If awarded, he would conduct several activities to consider the question, “As Brown Memorial continues to outgrow existing committee-based church models, what structures does the church need to build teams that are highly relational, nimble and adaptive to our rapidly changing urban cultural context?” An award decision will be announced this August.

■ Received generous gift from the estate of David Mock for the Endowment Fund, including the tutoring fund.

■ Approved a new Narcotics Anonymous (NA) group to meet at Brown Memorial.

■ Approved new Financial Procedures and Internal Controls document to implement safe, secure and transparent practices in Brown’s financial office, including adding more segregation of duties (e.g., the person who opens the mail is not the one who makes deposits).

■ Andrew Foster Connors instructed elders from the Book of Order on the theology and practice of the Communion service, in preparation for elders to serve.

■ Received a letter from Rev. Shu Lawrence Neba, pastor of Presbyterian Church Mbegnwi in Cameroon (our long-affiliated “sister congregation”), which shared news of political struggles in their “Anglophone region” where their Internet service has been shut down. They also suffered a terrible loss in their congregation when a local Chief died in a road accident. Rev. Neba enthusiastically said he continues to pray for our congregation and requests our prayers, as well. Session wrote to the church quarterly in 2017 and is looking to include other Brown members or friends in the pen pal relationship.

**Questions about this information are welcome. The Session Minutes Book is available for perusal in the Church Office by request.**

# Dr. Leana Wen Draws Crowd to Brown

Discussion focused on the opioid epidemic as a widespread disease.

by Lynda Burton

**A**s deaths from opioid overdose continue to mount around the country, with fatalities in Baltimore alone topping 700 people in 2017, society seems to finally recognize the situation as an epidemic.

On March 18 at Brown Memorial, Dr. Leana Wen, Baltimore City Health Commissioner, addressed about 100 Brown members and Bolton Hill residents on this epidemic, and discussed what communities can do to alleviate the crisis.

Dr. Wen emphasized the need for society, for all of us, to change our understanding of addiction, recognizing it as a disease and not a moral failing. Moral judgments have led to the stigmatization of addicts, so they receive little or no follow-up care for their condition.

She noted that, just as people with a heart attack or other serious medical condition receive immediate care and follow-up for their disease, those suffering from addiction need the same attention. She stressed that treatment is possible, though regrettably only a small number of those addicted actually receive the necessary care to achieve this.

Since no recovery can take place after an overdose fatality, the first step is to save lives. Dr. Wen discussed the antidote drug naloxone, which has a dramatic and immediate life-saving effect when administered to someone unconscious from an overdose. As part of the session, she invited two volunteers to help demonstrate how to recognize and then administer the drug to a person unconscious from an overdose.

Naloxone is available without prescription from pharmacies in the city, and Dr. Wen urged everyone to purchase and carry a supply. More than 1,600 lives have been saved by average citizens administering naloxone. Unfortunately, Dr. Wen also noted the health department's supply of naloxone will run out in a matter of



**Dr. Wen emphasized the need for society, for all of us, to change our understanding of addiction, recognizing it as a disease and not a moral failing.**



months due to lack of funds.

Physicians, through their prescribing patterns, have unwittingly contributed to the epidemic of addiction and illegal drug use. Anxious to eliminate pain in their patients, physicians have been quick to prescribe opioids, as pharmaceutical companies promote their use heavily, without warning about the addicting effect.

She encouraged physicians and patients to consider the recognized alternatives for pain management, emphasizing that patients themselves have an important role in questioning their health provider about these.

After the talk, Andrew Foster Connors joined Dr. Wen to lead the group in an engaging question and answer session. Pastor Foster Connors recognized the role the institutional church has played in stigmatizing addiction by failing to support persons suffering from this devastating illness.

“The faith community has a responsibility to work against the barriers of stigma, racism and inequity that are preventing our communities from receiving the healing that is possible and feeds a cycle of violence that exacerbate those inequities,” Andrew says. “We are excited to partner with Dr. Wen as she leads on this strategy that has already saved so many lives and sets the foundation that we need to build One Baltimore together.”

The Urban Witness Committee organized the event as part of its ongoing study of the epidemic to learn how faith communities and residents can be part of the solution. Faith communities have an important role in reducing the stigma attached to addiction and in healing the pain that it causes. It was incredibly affirming to have so many in the Bolton Hill Community join in this effort. ♦



### Safe Drug Disposal Bags Available

Safe disposal of excess opioids from prescriptions is a major issue. Prescription opioids may account for 78 percent of subsequent addiction and/or illegal use. Safe return boxes are now available at police stations, and increasingly pharmacies are agreeing to take back opioids.

Brown Memorial also has a limited supply of environmentally safe disposal bags that deactivate drugs, making it safe to dispose of them in household garbage. The Urban Witness Committee purchased these bags and they are available for pick up from the church narthex.



### NA Meetings Now Taking Place Fridays at Brown

Brown Memorial recently became an official opening meeting space for Narcotics Anonymous. An NA meeting takes place every Friday in the Church House parlor at 7 p.m. The format includes reading meetings, Step meetings and speaker meetings on a rotating basis. All are welcome.

# What Deacons DO

by Fred Cogswell

Have you ever wondered what deacons do? The Book of Order states:

*The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.*

Clearly, deacons are not the only ones who provide these ministries. Caregiving can be provided by clergy, families, friends, community members, other deacons and sometimes by strangers. We find caregiving among others in our church when we provide casseroles for the homeless, food and clothing for the Samaritan community and when we sit with another to discuss an issue or seemingly insurmountable difficulty. Many provide caregiving when praying for another who is experiencing illness, grief or family issues and in sharing thanksgiving for God's involvement with our lives.

Deacons at Brown Memorial decided to organize themselves to be responsible for an alphabetic arrangement of our church family. This arrangement does not mean that we are exclusively assigned to a single deacon; it means that a deacon has responsibility for responding to the needs of church members based on the alphabetic assignment while, in fact, other deacons and members of the church community could be and should be helpful as well. Each year, deacons discuss this arrangement and have reaffirmed that it is an ap-

propriate strategy for organizing our caregiving. We readily recognize that we regrettably may miss needs. Deacons welcome support from members of the church family to identify and address needs wherever they may be and to let us know of these needs.

It might be helpful to describe the work of deacons by the verbs that describe our work. Deacons...

**WRITE** notes, cards and emails.

**VISIT** after worship, in homes, in hospitals and nursing homes.

**CALL** church members to support them.

**TAKE** meals to those in need.

**TRANSPORT** to physicians, hospitals and church.

**PRAY** for those who choose to engage in prayer.

**CELEBRATE** with those experiencing wonder in their lives such as births, anniversaries, marriage, job promotions and awards.

**GREET** visitors and new members.

**SUPPORT** those who are grieving and those who require assistance in attending worship.

**EXAMINE AND DISCUSS**

literature that informs and focuses our work, such as bereavement and Alzheimer issues.

We are all caregivers. Deacons have a special responsibility to ensure that we are identifying and addressing needs among God's people at Brown Memorial. ♦

**The Deacons provide caregiving by alphabetic assignment.**

**(A-B) Rachel Clark**

clarkmusiclover@gmail.com

**(C) Fred Cogswell**

cogswelf@comcast.net

**(D-E-F) Kirk Fulton**

Fultonkr10@yahoo.com

**(G-H) Lucille McCarthy**

mccarthy@umbc.edu

**(I-J-K-L) Jim Cox**

jimcox904@aol.com

**(M-N) Bonnie Schneider**

bonnieeldens@verizon.net

**(O-P-R) Rick Thomas**

rjthomas4@verizon.net

**(S-T) Amy Munds**

amy.munds@yahoo.com

**(U-V-W-Z) Geralyn Schroth**

geralyn.schroth@morganstanley.com



# Construction Update

by Betsy Nix

**The South Tower** is stable and has officially re-opened, although the lack of safety rails keeps the balcony off limits. Take a peek at the exposed stone walls, refurbished staircase, new installation of the original door and open view to dizzying heights. Workers will soon be painting the risers and treads and staining the visible underside of the stairs. Exterior cleaning and repointing will take place once we get mortar approval from the Maryland Historical Trust and the weather warms.

Indoors, the **Fellowship Building** has been closed off for daily use. Hazmat contractors have abated asbestos in the basement to allow workers to access necessary areas safely. When in November the original cost estimates for the Fellowship Building came in higher than expected, the design/build team of Murphy & Dittenhafer and Marani value-engineered the HVAC system to save over \$75,000. The pause in the project allowed the on-site project manager to thoroughly investigate how the building is put together, and now we have a better idea of the true demands and scope of the project, and do not expect major surprises or add-ons.

As we assessed the current systems and arrangements, we decided to add two projects to the original plan: replace the failing sanctuary condenser units and expand the undersized organ blower room in the basement. These projects, and the \$32,000 abatement, will increase the scope beyond the project as described in the capital campaign, but completing them now will be more cost-effective down the road. The disappointment is that none of them will be visible, although we will all appreciate more efficient and effective climate control in the sanctuary, and a safer basement for heat-producing organ components.

So far we have pledges of \$1.2 million. Please consider contributing to the effort for the first time or increasing your pledge. **Many thanks** to all of those



who have already donated generously to this five-year campaign above and beyond your annual giving.

The construction committee has already knocked down a wall in the kitchen to remove the freezers and the range, and Marani expects to begin full-scale demolition on April 23. They estimate **the project will take eight months**. Check the *This Week @Brown* e-newsletter for photos of the progress once the work commences. ♦

# Tutoring Corner

## "Party With a Purpose" Raises Funds for Tutoring Program

by Rob Kasper



In the middle of a cocktail party, Amy Munds tossed a beach ball at the guests.

It was not an ordinary party nor an ordinary beach ball. The gathering in the Bolton Hill home of Michael Booth and Kristine Smets was a "party with a purpose," an event that combines socializing with social action.

Such parties, organized by the Bolton Hill Community Association (formerly the Mt. Royal Improvement Association), serve as fund raisers for neighborhood projects. This particular Sunday afternoon get-together benefited Fresh at The Avenue, a food sharing operation in Reservoir Hill, and the Brown Memorial Tutoring Program. It raised \$1,300 for the two organizations.

Some 75 guests donated money, sipped wine, munched on food and listened as representatives of the two groups gave brief outlines of their programs. After Sache' Jones described how her Pennsylvania Avenue storefront distributes fresh produce to West Baltimore families, Munds and her beach ball took the floor.

Taped to the ball were pieces of paper carrying one-syllable words. The word-laden ball is one of the tools,

she explained, used in the tutoring program to keep students engaged. With that, she tossed the ball at a startled spectator.

"What word do you see?" she asked. "Sin," came the reply. "Spell it," Munds continued. "S-i-n," the spectator answered. "Use it in a sentence," said Munds. The spectator paused, "Sin no more," he replied.

Retrieving the ball, Munds, Assistant Director of the Tutoring Program, quickly outlined the program's scope and goals. Started in 1964 by women members of the Brown Memorial congregation as a way to help struggling readers, the current program has expanded to serve 90 elementary school students drawn from four Baltimore schools, Mount Royal, Baltimore Montessori, Dorothy I. Height Elementary School and Eutaw-Marshburn. A cadre of 74 adult volunteer tutors use Orton-Gillingham techniques of reading instruction to assist the students who have been identified by their teachers as needing extra help.

Not being able to read well can put children in a self-defeating spiral, Munds told the crowd.

"Imagine you are an elementary school student who doesn't speak the

language," Munds said. "And you are expected to read and write about a book that you don't understand. That is what many of our kids face. And when they see that other kids around them are getting it, are understanding, then their self-esteem drops. They don't try and a negative way of living sets in."

The Tutoring Program works to combat that slide, Munds said, adding that test results have shown that the children in the program have improved their reading skills.

The theme of this particular "party with a purpose" was honoring Black History Month and readings on food from African American authors were featured.

In that vein, Munds read a poem to the group written last year by Laila Fleming, a 10-year-old African-American student in the Brown Memorial tutoring program.

*"Shrimp.  
Small, pink.  
Peel the shell.  
Dipping in sauce.  
Shrimp."*

Amid the applause and laughter, Munds picked up her beach ball and melted into the crowd. ♦



## Thank you from Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary

We recently received the following thank you note for the volunteer efforts of Brown Memorial members at EMES.

To the members of the Brown Memorial Church:

On behalf of Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School, we would like to send a huge thank you for all of the support that you have provided to our school.

In particular, we appreciate your thoughtfulness in providing our students with snacks to enjoy after the PARCC assessment starting in two weeks. I told Mrs. [Chrystie] Adams that it was only God at work when I had just spoken to Principal Cole about not having any snacks for testing at this point. It wasn't even a second later that I got a call on the intercom stating that Mrs. Adams was in the office with a delivery of testing snacks. As the song goes, "He may not come when you want, but he'll be there right on time."

Last Tuesday was a true testament to have faith in your community and most of all have faith in God. Again, we are so appreciative of the church's continued support of our school through donations, the choir, the tutoring and the love. We cannot thank you enough. You are always welcomed members of the EMES family. Feel free to stop by and say hello anytime or give us a call at 410-396-0779.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. Erika Robinson  
Testing Coordinator [EMES]

## New on the Church Website



During the 2018 Lenten season, we focused on the theme of "Stations of Faith." Members of our congregation shared stories of their own faith journeys every Sunday. These stories were powerful and moving, and each week during spring 2018, we are sharing one of the faith journey stories on our website so that we may continue to be inspired by them. Visit [browndowntown.org/latest-news](http://browndowntown.org/latest-news).



## May Birthdays

05/01	Laura S. Urban
05/02	Aaron McNabney
05/04	Tyler Hoffberger
05/04	Tom McManus
05/04	Teddy Obrecht
05/05	Elizabeth Reichelt
05/06	Ashley Boumgarden
05/07	David Rollison
05/08	Julian Finney
05/08	Grace Hand
05/09	Charlie Obrecht
05/10	Barbara Clippinger
05/10	Sue Galusha-Bobango
05/11	Matthew Fedderly
05/11	Khoa Nguyen
05/13	Josephine Finney
05/17	Margaret McManus
05/17	Andrew Ross
05/18	Caroline Anderson
05/18	Laura Filipp
05/19	Daniel Burton
05/20	Carolyn Marks
05/20	Anna Marie
05/20	Brennan Taylor
05/20	John H. Tucker
05/21	Art Hall
05/21	Mary Jane Sokol
05/22	Michael Asike
05/22	Nancy Bradford
05/23	Page Campbell
05/25	Emily Reed
05/26	Laura McNabney
05/27	Ellen Carter Cooper
05/27	Jackson Mills
05/28	Landon Reiman
05/28	Mary C. Walker
05/30	Andrew Winters
05/31	Christopher
	Brennan Taylor



## June Birthdays

06/02 Billy Clippinger  
 06/04 Will Brockman  
 06/04 Sarah Reiman  
 06/05 Emy Urban  
 06/06 Lorrie Liang  
 06/07 Lydia Beasley  
 06/09 Kelly Knock  
 06/10 Erika Brockman  
 06/10 Cal Riorda  
 06/10 Dre Williams  
 06/11 Loretta Byers  
 06/11 Caleb Brennan Taylor  
 06/12 Erin Emerick  
 06/12 Abby Jackson  
 06/12 Peggy Obrecht  
 06/12 Mary Obrecht  
 06/13 Will Coulson  
 06/13 Robert Marshall  
 06/14 Fado Yoon  
 06/15 Justin Garcia-Bunuel  
 06/15 Jacob Thompson  
 06/15 Noah Todd  
 06/17 Linnet Jones  
 06/17 William Rogers  
 06/18 Madison Riorda  
 06/19 Rain Hall  
 06/19 Trevor Hoffberger  
 06/20 Jakob Lucas  
 06/21 Lily Bradford  
 06/21 Joe Schindler  
 06/21 Dale Terrill  
 06/22 Nancy Bandiere  
 06/22 Peter Coulson  
 06/22 Rebecca Crew  
 06/22 Taylor Jackson  
 06/22 Tom Stewart  
 06/22 Jihar Williams  
 06/23 Paul Forward  
 06/23 Rachel Forward  
 06/23 Max Palmer  
 06/24 Patti Flowers-Coulson  
 06/26 Graham Bishai  
 06/26 Emmett Dahl  
 06/26 Madora Henson  
 06/26 Kerry Johnston  
 06/28 Jack Mitchell  
 06/28 Maggie Johnston  
 06/28 Ella Palmer  
 06/28 Geralyn Schroth  
 06/28 Nancy Warner  
 06/29 Judson Arnold  
 06/30 Paul Newill-Schamp



## Brown Beyond Park Avenue

### Staying connected to one another in the church's Facebook "Group"

by Jennifer Michael, Communications Manager

In last month's *Tidings*, I wrote an article about how Brown Memorial's public Facebook page—[www.facebook.com/BrowndowntownBaltimore](http://www.facebook.com/BrowndowntownBaltimore)—is a great way to externally spread the word about Brown among social networks.

This month, I will explain how the church's closed Facebook group—[www.facebook.com/groups/BrowndowntownBaltimore](http://www.facebook.com/groups/BrowndowntownBaltimore)—is another great form of communication, but for internal purposes among church members and friends.

Unlike the public Facebook *page*, which can be "liked" and viewed by anyone with a Facebook account (and only administrators can post to the page), the Facebook *group* is intended only for members and friends of the church with Facebook accounts. It is designated as "closed," meaning that anyone wanting to join the group must request to join and be approved by Brown staff who oversee the page.

To date, Brown's Facebook group has 236 members and any members can post to the group. Examples of posts have included requests to help out with or participate in a church activity (decorating the sanctuary for Easter or canoeing the Susquehanna River with the Green Team, for example). Members of the group have also shared links to articles and organizations that the church is involved in, such as Meals on Wheels and Turnaround Tuesdays, and shared photos from Sunday worship, mission trips and Presbytery events. Some posts have also been as simple as requesting a ride to church, or posting a need for a bridge partner.

It is not clear to some how to find and join the closed Facebook group. Here are a few simple steps:

■ Go to the church website, [browndowntown.org](http://browndowntown.org). Scroll to the bottom of the homepage and click on the Facebook logo under “Stay Connected.” This takes you to Brown’s public Facebook page.

■ Once on the public Facebook page, click on the “Groups” tab on the left side of the page. You will see “Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church” closed group listed. Click on this.

■ Once on the group page, if you are not a member, you will see a tab for “Request to Join” under the cover photo. Click the tab to send your request, and a member of the church staff will add you to the group and you can then participate in discussion and post to the group’s timeline.

As a member of the Facebook group, you can click on the “Notifications” tab under the cover photo to turn on or off notifications every time someone posts to the group’s timeline.

Have you ever visited Brown Memorial on Facebook and been confused about whether or not you are on the public page or the group page? Here are a couple easy ways to know the difference—the public page has the Brown Memorial logo under the church name in the upper left corner. The group page usually has a photo of church members as the cover photo, and the word “groups” is in the web URL.

If you haven’t done so already, visit [www.facebook.com/groups/BrowndowntownBaltimore](https://www.facebook.com/groups/BrowndowntownBaltimore), request to join and stay connected, beyond Sunday. ♦



## It's Getting Warmer. Wear Your Brown Memorial T-Shirt!

Help us spread the word that Brown Memorial is “Alive in the city and the world.” If you wear your t-shirt around town or on vacation in a cool location, take a picture and share it with us by posting to the church Facebook group. Don’t have a Brown t-shirt? Email Rachel Cunningham, [rachel@browndowntown.org](mailto:rachel@browndowntown.org).



## July Birthdays

07/03	Howard De Hoff
07/03	Peter Hoffberger
07/03	Lehn Robinson
07/03	Jennifer Simmons
07/03	Tom Waldron
07/05	Will Fesperman
07/05	Fritz Lazarus
07/06	Michael Britt
07/06	Hannah Milcarek
07/06	J. D. Robinson
07/09	Charlie Obrecht
07/10	Chuck Brown
07/12	Anna Connors
07/12	Rose Glorioso
07/13	Andrew Babb
07/14	Eric Echols
07/15	Franklin Branch
07/15	Dan Hale
07/16	Liam Abernethy
07/16	Ann Teaff
07/18	Rachel Emerick
07/19	John Boumgarden
07/19	Rachel E. Clark
07/21	Hilbert Byers
07/22	Wells Obrecht
07/24	Doug Adams
07/25	Gerald Shields
07/27	Ellen B. Williams
07/28	Erin Bobango
07/29	Ian Munds
07/30	Matthew Dahl
07/31	Valerie Hinkle
07/31	Aidan Lorch-Liebel



To have your birthday listed in the *Tidings*, contact Sharon Holley, church secretary, 410-523-1542, or [Sharon@browndowntown.org](mailto:Sharon@browndowntown.org).





# BMPA Calendar

*Alive in the City  
and the World*

## Summer Schedule Begins Sunday, May 27

**Worship will move to 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 27, through Sunday, Sept. 2. Education classes will take a break during this time.**

**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.

**Every Friday, NA,** 7 p.m. Church House Parlor. An open Narcotics Anonymous meeting.

**May 6 & 19, Inquirer's Class,** May 6, 12:30-2:30 p.m. May 19, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Church House First Floor. *Details page 4.*

**May 6, Tiffany Series: "A Passion for Poulenc" Concert,** 7:30 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 6.*

**May 8, Theology on Tap,** 7:30-9:30 p.m. Location and topic TBA. Contact Chip at [cmorganriegel@gmail.com](mailto:cmorganriegel@gmail.com) for more information.

**May 17, Prayer Shawl Ministry,** 1-3 p.m. Enjoy support and fellowship while making prayer shawls for those in need. Contact [rossinbalt@verizon.net](mailto:rossinbalt@verizon.net) for info.

**May 19, Parents Night Out,** 6-10 p.m. Church House. *Details on page 4.*

**May 27, Sunday Night Live!,** 5:30-8 p.m. Our monthly gathering for middle and high school youth. Location TBA.

**June 6, July 4, Aug. 1, Hymn Sing and Lemonade,** 6-7 p.m. Church front steps. *See page 5 for details.*

**June 10, Youth Car Wash, Cook-out and Bake Sale,** 11-1 p.m. Church front steps. *See page 4 for details.*

**June 19-28, El Salvador Mission Trip.**

**June 25-28, Soaring Eagles Learning Camp,** Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School. A Brown Memorial-hosted summer enrichment program for EMES students. Contact Chrystie Adams, [cladams22@verizon.net](mailto:cladams22@verizon.net), to volunteer.

**July 6, Silent Film & Organ Concert,** 7 p.m. *See page 5 for details.*

**July 13 & 20, Summer Concert Series,** 7 p.m. *See page 5 for details.*

**July 21-22, Artscape at Brown,** *See page 5 for details.*

**July 28-Aug. 4, Pejuhutazizi Family Learning Camp,** Upper Sioux Community Center, Granit Falls, MN. Brown Memorial members participate in a summer enrichment camp for Upper Sioux Community children. Learn more at [baltimoredakotalearningcamps.org](http://baltimoredakotalearningcamps.org).

**July 29-Aug. 4, Montreat High School Conference.**

## Tidings

*Good News from Brown  
Memorial Park Avenue  
Presbyterian Church*

1316 Park Avenue,  
Baltimore, MD, 21217.  
410.523.1542.  
[browndowntown.org](http://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](mailto:jmichael@browndowntown.org). Due dates this year: 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](http://browndowntown.org).*



Visit us on Facebook:  
[BrowndowntownBaltimore](https://www.facebook.com/BrowndowntownBaltimore)



**BROWN  
MEMORIAL  
PARK AVENUE**

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)