

# Tidings

AUG/SEPT 2018

## Pastor's Reflections

**Rev. Andrew Foster Connors**  
Senior Pastor

**“Moral communities are fragile things, hard to build and easy to destroy.”**  
—Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*



The new church year is nearly upon us and I've been thinking all summer about what it means to be a part of this body called the church. The

phrase “church member,” after all, is not rooted in contemporary consumerist notions of being a member of a club or a gym. It's rooted in the body. What would it mean for us to view our congregation as a living organism defined by the interdependence of its parts? There again, language fails us. The word “parts” connotes independent pieces first, connection second, whereas the word “member” implies connection from the beginning. “Member” cannot survive without connection to the whole.

This summer we welcomed 27 new members, one of many joyful signs of God's Spirit in our midst. I sound like a broken record saying it, but our growth means that we have to be

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## A New Church Year Begins

Join us Sept. 9 for 11 a.m. worship and lunch

by Rachel Cunningham

**S**ummer is winding down and we are looking ahead to a new church year. Our program year officially begins on Sunday, Sept. 9 at 9:45 a.m. This is the day when all of our education classes resume, the choir returns, and worship moves back to 11 a.m. We have much news to share as the year begins, besides the addition to our staff of a new associate pastor.

Construction on the Fellowship Building is in full swing, which means all of our education classes (Adult Bible Study, Meditation Circle, Children and Youth Sunday School, including Confirmation) will remain in their temporary locations in the Church House. Look for signs in the Church House to direct you. A reminder, our Nursery opens at 9:30 a.m. each Sunday to allow parents the opportunity to participate in these educational offerings

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## — INSIDE —

**Welcome Michele.** Announcing our new Associate Pastor. See page 3.

**Environmental Talk.** Make your garden ecologically sound. See page 4.

**Report from Cuba.** Building a relationship in Camajuani. See page 6.

**El Salvador Mission.** Our youth returned to Maria Madre. See page 8.

## Pastor's Reflections

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more intentional about how we are building new relationships and sustaining long ones. Not a week goes by that I do not hear people expressing concern, fear, worry or disappointment that “I look around and don’t know half the congregation.” The good news is that this seems to be common experience of many, new and old, instead of an isolating experience of a few.

The other good news is that your leadership is clear on this challenge and is organizing much of our common life around it. From more extended times of greeting each other in worship, to an Assembly Room renovation meant to encourage even greater opportunities for meals and fellowship, to Small Groups version 2.0 coming this fall, to some greater use of nametags, new member gatherings, and post-church gatherings, we are increasingly aligning much of our life together around this central challenge that we are facing together.

This challenge is a gift to us and it’s one that can’t be solved with programmatic techniques. It requires a shift in how we approach each other. Two questions that every member and friend of Brown Memorial can ask of themselves: What is my experience of connection at Brown and what am I doing to relate to others?

I’m thrilled that, beginning this fall, Michele Ward—our new Associate Pastor—will be here to help us with this challenge, among many others. Michele has so many gifts that she brings into the life of the church. From her joyful experience working with youth, to her deep commitment to hospitality, to her deep-seated spirituality, strengthened through some significant trials and transitions in her own sense of call, to her artistic vision and creative mind. She’s going to bring all kinds of new energy, new ideas and new questions to our life together. She’s going to challenge us and I bet we’re going to chal-

lenge her. Thankfully, this is what we all want from each other in the journey of faith!

If we pay attention to building the relationship, by this time next year, I think the “we and us” is going to become “we and we.” Just as relationships are at the heart of our congregation’s focus, so it’s at the heart of Michele’s ethics and practices for ministry. I have no doubt that the Spirit has brought us together. I can’t wait to see what the Spirit is going to do with all of us!

As we make this transition I would be remiss not to thank the entire staff for filling in some gaps over the past year with additional recognition for a few. Tim Hughes Williams modeled perfectly what it means for a departing Associate Pastor to extricate himself from the congregation while making sure that our youth received the support they needed. We wish him well as he continues on his journey as Pastor of Light Street.

Michael Britt has picked up many of the things I have dropped while trying to hold things together—everything from choosing hymns, to opening and closing facilities, to pastoral visits and Bible study. And Rachel Cunningham has carried more things than I can count. From making sure no detail is missed on our construction progress meetings, to arranging worship leaders, to organizing mission trip plans, to leading the Bible study—we’d be in bad shape without her. Please add your words of gratitude to these members of what is an amazing team of dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ. Fall, here we come! ♦



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

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Take time on Sunday to say hi to our new members. We will be sharing their stories in upcoming *Tidings*.





# WELCOME

## Michele Ward!

On Aug. 5, the congregation unanimously voted to welcome Michele Ward as Brown Memorial's new Associate Pastor.



**M**ichele comes to us from Broad Street Ministry in Philadelphia, where she is the social engagement minister and coordinator. She has a bachelor's degree in English/Writing from Whitworth University, and a master of divinity from the Seattle School of Theology and Psychology.

Michele is scheduled to begin at Brown Memorial on Sept. 16. Her installation date will be set for this fall. Look for more information about Michele and her installation in the next *Tidings*.



June Fletcher-Hill, Chair of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee, said that during her conversations with Michele's references, each representing different periods of Michele's life, certain words and themes showed up again and again—"relational," "collaborative," "confident," "empathetic," "a visionary," "one who gets things done."

"It was exciting to learn about the breadth of Michele's experience as well as the type of person she is: one who is deeply dedicated to her call to ministry in an intentional, thoughtful way," June said.

The following was shared about Michele in a brochure that was sent to the congregation in July by the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee:

Michele grew up in the San Joaquin Valley in Modesto, California. She was the fifth generation in her family to live in that region. She comes from a long line of educators, pastors, farmers, and business owners. Her great-grandfather's furniture store is still open today. Embracing her ancestors' wanderlust, Michele

moved to the Pacific Northwest in college and stuck around to enjoy good coffee, excellent hikes, and mountainous skylines.

It was in Seattle she met her husband, Matthew "Parker" Park, a fellow Whitworth graduate and performer. He is a current MFA candidate at the University of the Arts in their Devised Performance program.

Michele has two sisters in Turlock, California, and a brother in Sacramento, California. Her father lives in Oklahoma and her mother lives in Turlock. Modesto gave Michele lessons on the importance of dreams, Seattle taught Michele resilience, and Philadelphia taught Michele the power of a meaningful invitation. Michele looks forward to what Baltimore will teach her!

Michele trained facilitators to lead trauma-informed writing workshops the last two years, wishes she read more fiction than she does, and enjoys curating green spaces. Most of her favorite people are young or young at heart. She thinks that 12-year-olds are the best comedians and prefers ice cream for dinner. ♦

## Session News & Notes

**The following are recent actions taken and reports received by the Session.**

Submitted by Laura Urban, Co-Clerk of Session

■ Session received a report from Rachel Cunningham on the use of Brown's Safe Church Policy & Covenant, first approved in 2011, to "prevent child abuse and sexual misconduct in our congregation and on church property, and to address it, if it occurs or is suspected, in a way that honors our biblical mandate to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God." Session agreed to form a work group to update current implementation, including training of volunteers, on the policy. Andrew Foster Connors, Rachel Cunningham and Mike Reed will serve on the work group, recruiting others to join in.

■ Received a report (and gifts) from the Brown members who visited the Presbyterian Church in Camajuani, Cuba in April. The Cuba delegation was Deb Baer, Emily Brown, Jody Shaw and David Nyweide. Session approved a request for the delegation to pursue a three-year partnership agreement between the Cuban church and Brown Memorial.

■ Heard a report from youth elders Steedman Jenkins and Anna Foster Connors about the trip to El Salvador this summer. The trip was both "disturbing and inspiring," said the teens.

■ Reviewed the staff response to the Church Goals and Values draft. A Session work group will make another draft for the Session to review in the summer.

■ The Investment Committee reported that they are considering options for Socially Responsible Investments to address the question, "How do we express our values as a church with money?" Socially responsible investing generally takes the form of either 1) omitting certain businesses (e.g., firearms, alcohol, tobacco) from investments; or 2) investing in "socially responsible funds" that bundle "approved" companies together. Both versions have pros and cons. Committee Chair Stephen Ruckman will return with a recommendation for Session to consider at a later date.

■ As requested by the Trustees, Session approved the \$31,470 expense to fund the second phase of window repair in the church house. ♦

## Upcoming

**Brown Green Team events planned for fall.**

by McKay Jenkins

### *Environmental Talk*

On **Tuesday Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.**, nationally renowned ecologist Doug Tallamy will present a slideshow in the sanctuary about the importance of native plants and trees to the restoration of our Chesapeake watershed. Tallamy, a professor of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware and the author of the award-winning book "Bringing Nature Home," has become a guru to people working to make their home gardens and our regional landscapes more ecologically sound. His talk is especially transforming for those interested in native plants and native bird populations. This talk is free and open to the public.

### *Canoe Trip*

On **Saturday, Nov. 10**, the Green Team will host a youth Chesapeake watershed canoe adventure at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Arthur Sherwood Environmental Center. This day of exploration and learning on the water will also include our friends from Migde Lucas's Central American congregation outside Annapolis.

### *Tree Planting*

The Green Team will also be planting between 30 and 40 trees at Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School this fall. Stay tuned for a date.

## New Church Year

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### Post Worship Events

Several post worship events are planned for this fall that you'll want to add to your calendars, beginning with the now annual "back to church" potluck on Sept. 9 immediately following worship. Watch for more details in the weekly announcements. Save the dates for these upcoming events.

- **Sept. 23** - Responding to the Opioid Crisis
- **Oct. 14** - Green Team Conversations
- **Oct. 21** - Reflections from the Cuba Delegation

### New Small Groups

In addition to these post worship events, we are pleased to introduce several new small group opportunities based on the survey results we received this spring. A team has been busy this summer recruiting leaders and hosts as well as securing dates and times. An invitation to participate in these small group offerings went out in early August. If you did not receive it and would like to participate, please contact Rachel Cunningham at [rachel@browndowntown.org](mailto:rachel@browndowntown.org) or (410)523-1542 Ext 14. Groups range in topic from community organizing and outreach, to literature discussions, singing and personal reflections. There are also some dinner groups in the mix. Groups are intentionally limited in size to honor the deeper relational connections that naturally develop when people gather in smaller

settings. With that in mind, our goal is to repeat these groups again in January to allow for broad congregational participation. A full listing of the small group can be found on the "Latest News" page at [browndowntown.org/latest-news](http://browndowntown.org/latest-news).

### All Church Retreat

Due to scheduling conflicts, our All Church Retreat will not take place this fall. Instead, everyone is invited to an All Church Picnic at Pen Mar Park in Washington County, MD, on Saturday, Sept. 29. More details to follow.

### Youth News

With the Fellowship Building still under construction, we've gotten creative with our monthly youth events. Mark your calendars and save these dates so you don't miss out on the fun:

- **Aug. 26, 6 p.m.** - Escape Room Adventures
- **Sept. 28-30** - Hiking Weekend (middle school youth will join high school youth for a day hike on 9/29. Youth will then meet the rest of the congregation at Pen Mar for the All Church Picnic.)
- **Nov. 10** - Canoe Trip with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- **Dec. 7** - Progressive Christmas Dinner ♦

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## MUSIC NOTES

The first Chancel Choir rehearsal is **Thursday, Sept. 6 at 7 p.m.** New members are always welcome. Contact Michael Britt at [michael@browndowntown.org](mailto:michael@browndowntown.org) or 410-961-1300. The Chancel Choir will sing on Rally Day, Sept. 9.

Look for more information in the bulletin and our e-newsletter *This Week @Brown* about our Handbell Choir and other musical ensembles.





## *Brown Memorial Alive in the City and World:* **Mission Trip to Cuba**



# Witnessing God at Work in Cuba

by David Nyweide

I sat in a sable pew trying to make sense of a word or phrase in Spanish but noticing more of the sounds of the street outside the louvered windows—the clip clop of horse hooves on the broken pavement; the shift of an old car rumbling by; chirps from swallows; and calls from people down the street. It was a Sunday morning before worship, and two Elders of the church were at the front of the sanctuary holding Bible study on the lectionary text. Children were in the nearby church courtyard participating in Sunday school. Pastor Marielys was in a corner of the sanctuary ensuring that the music for worship was in order on the laptop connected to a speaker.

Although the coming worship service wouldn't be in my primary language, it would still unfold with the familiar Presbyterian liturgical structure. This particular Presbyterian church in Camajuani, Cuba was built in the 1950s before the Cuban revolution. The sanctuary has white-washed walls and ceiling with about a dozen rows of pews split by a center aisle of black and white checkered tile. At the front of the sanctuary is an elevated space surrounded by wood-paneled walls with a lectern and a handful of ornate chairs the same color as the pews. Atop everything is a large cross.

Presbyterians had established churches and schools in

Cuba since the 1890s, but after the revolution, the practice of religion was heavily discouraged by the state until soon after the fall of the Berlin wall in 1991, when the Cuban government loosened its religious strictures.

Since that time, Presbyterian churches in Cuba have gradually rejuvenated and formed partnerships with churches outside Cuba. One such church in the Baltimore Presbytery formed a partnership with a Cuban church in El Centro Presbytery in 1999 and, within five years, a formal partnership emerged between the two presbyteries. The presbytery-level partnership provides support for what has grown to eight additional church-to-church partnerships and organizes a biannual grand meeting in Cuba called the Encuentro for pastors and laypeople affiliated with both presbyteries.

In November 2016, a delegation from Brown Memorial—Deb Baer, Fred Cogswell and Jody Shaw—visited several churches in the El Centro Presbytery to explore the possibility of establishing a partnership with one of them. Then, from April 27 to May 2, 2018, one of those churches, the church in Camajuani, hosted a second delegation from Brown Memorial—Deb and Jody returned with Emily Brown and me.

Throughout our stay, the church introduced us to its proyectos, or projects, otherwise known as ministries. We accompanied church members on home visits around Camajuani where someone was enduring sickness or a family was celebrating the joy of a newborn. We witnessed young children listening to stories from the Bible and making crafts at the church. We participated in one of the exercise classes hosted in the church courtyard, and we cheerfully broke bread one evening in a church member's home.

As the time grew closer to the start of worship that Sunday, the four of us from Brown Memorial found open seats in the back pews. At the opening hymn, Pastor Marielys processed down the center aisle with two young teenage girls who joined her at the front of the sanctuary. The girls read part of the liturgy and sat next to the pastor throughout the service. The music was played over the speaker, and we sang from a bound booklet of hymns kept at each pew. At one point, we were invited to the front of the church to be introduced, and we expressed our gratitude for the warmth and hospitality of the congregation. Marielys preached on the parable of the vine and branches while our interpreter translated chunks of the sermon to Deb and me. But we didn't need an interpreter at the close of the service.

For the benediction, eight of the young teenage girls positioned themselves down the center aisle and waited for their music to start. Entirely on their own, they had choreographed and rehearsed an interpretive dance for this service.

Amid the music and dance, my eyes dampened, moved at the realization that Pastor Marielys had been giving these girls a sense of belonging, building their confidence and empowering them in a town and country that doesn't provide many opportunities for them.

As I sat hardly able to keep my cheeks dry at the end of the service, I could appreciate how the Cuban church cultivates a community of believers who lift each other up, providing them permission to dream in a country whose modern history has delayed their dreams. A key purpose for the formation of the Baltimore Presbytery and El Centro Presbytery partnership—and what has sustained it for the past dozen years—is the opportunity to foster relationships and to promote reconciliation between the American and Cuban people in the breach between their governments. I certainly wouldn't have been able to apprehend what God is up to in Cuba without sitting in that pew.

In June, Session approved the pursuit of a partnership agreement between Brown Memorial and the church in Camajuani. Although the details are currently being discerned, the agreement would last three years before being re-examined for renewal. It will likely involve mutual prayer for our congregations, an emphasis on open communication, and visits from our congregation, all with the purpose to learn from each other and celebrate what we have in common through the reconciling love of Jesus Christ. ♦





*Brown Memorial Alive in the City and World:*  
**Mission Trip to El Salvador**

## Visiting Our Sister Congregation

by Andrew Foster Connors

**O**n June 19, a delegation of Brown Memorial youth and leaders departed Baltimore bound for San Salvador. For 10 days we were guests of our sister congregation, Maria Madre de Los Pobres, with whom Brown Memorial has had a relationship spanning more than 30 years.

The members of the Brown delegation were five youth—Warner Brockman, Anna Connors, Bea Guzman, Steedman Jenkins and Annie Schindler—and two adults—Andrew Foster Connors and Killian McGinnis.

At Brown Memorial, as in the larger Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) we do mission in partnership. The focus of our trip was on deepening our long-term relationships with Maria Madre and the neighborhood where Maria Madre is located (La Chacra), with particular focus on youth gaining a greater understanding of the current challenges facing our siblings in the faith and looking for ways to act on what we learn, both in El Salvador and at home.

In La Chacra, the parish continues to be divided geographically, along lines established by three of El Salvador's powerful gangs. American privilege enabled us to walk freely across those lines during the day, but we heard again and again of the challenges faced by residents who have to navigate these three territories as a part of their daily lives.

Things have improved in the last six months after police action against one of the gangs, but the situation is far from resolved. We learned that these gangs originated in Los Angeles, where crimes against Salvadorans led to the creation of gangs for protection. These gangs were hardened in U.S. prisons and exported through Ameri-





can deportation policies. The gangs have flourished in El Salvador among young people, especially those whose parents have left them to migrate to the United States for work.

The parish continues with many programs to support the development of young people, including a day school, afterschool program (Escuela Abierta), recreation activities, a senior center and a night school which has shifted to Saturday because of the gang violence. Brown Memorial has provided financial assistance to these programs through the years. Families and individuals at Brown have also supported individual children through the Godparent program. As a part of our trip, we visited with families, sharing gifts and correspondence from Godparents here.

We also visited several anti-violence programs supported through the Mayor's office. Hernán, a "child of the church," now a young man, administers the programs through the Mayor's office. Tierra del Fuego, a dance troupe in La Chacra, provides something for kids to do after school, while teaching them traditional song and dance. This fall, 12 dancers will travel to Panama to perform, and five will go to Argentina. Because of our long-term relationships with Hernán, the group made history as the first delegation from Brown Memorial to make a nighttime excursion in San Salvador. We celebrated the greater sense of safety that has been achieved in the downtown area, permitting us and Salvadorans of all ages to venture out at night.

We also made several excursions to other areas, including Suchitoto where we visited a women's cooperative that makes artisanal clothing with local indigo; Cinquera, where we visited an ecological park that also serves as a history walk of the Salvadoran Civil War (1980-1992) and heard from a family that fought as guerrillas during the war; and Cabañas, where we visited Radio Victoria (a promoter of human rights and democracy) and the home of Lidia Levia, an anti-mining activist and dear friend of Brown Memorial. There she showed us her farm, including a demonstration of their special compost recipe.

All of our excursions included participants from Madre's youth group. The hope is that youth-to-youth relationships, over time, will deepen our partnership and lead to unexpected opportunities in the future. A great example of that hope in action is Killian McGinnis, now a senior at Swarthmore College, who twice participated as a delegate on past trips and this time served as a leader and chaperone. Killian has developed deep relationships in La Chacra over the years and mesmerized our youth with her language skills and cultural competency. She filled in for Barbara Cook after a foot fracture prevented Barbara from joining us on the journey.

Our group plans to meet again over the summer to discuss some type of educational event for the larger church. We look forward to sharing more of what we learned! ♦

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## *Alive in the City and World:* **Soaring Eagles Learning Camp**

by Elden Schneider

**E**arly in the summer, June 25-28, the cafeteria and halls of Eutaw-Marshburn Elementary School (EMES) bustled with activity as more than 70 registered campers and 43 volunteers from Baltimore (including 17 from Brown Memorial), North Carolina and Iowa converged for the seventh annual Soaring Eagles Learning Camp. Our Iowa partners came from Westminster Presbyterian Church in Des

Moines, and they stayed at The Center where Kate Foster Connors and her staff coordinated their activities.


Directed by Chrystie Adams who created a carefully crafted schedule, campers in five age groups circulated through six learning stations located in various parts of the building: 1) Story Time/Book Nook, where students listened to, read and selected books to take home; 2) Healthy Me, where students discussed, made and ate

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## August Birthdays

08/01	Deb Milcarek
08/01	Malinda Peeples
08/02	Rachael Edgin
08/02	Beverly Hensley
08/04	William McConnell
08/04	Neal Naff
08/05	Chuck Holland
08/08	Adam Forward
08/09	Donald McPherson
08/10	Osaro Grayson
08/11	Mehran Armand
08/11	Emily Rose Proctor
08/12	Gilly Babb
08/13	Edward McCarthy
08/13	David Todd
08/14	George Brown
08/14	Mike Reed
08/15	Cecelia Reichelt
08/15	Sallie Robinson
08/17	Elizabeth Lee Williams
08/20	Araman Adams
08/20	Jack McManus
08/20	Betsey Todd
08/21	JoAnn Copes
08/21	James Egan
08/21	Tim Hughes Williams
08/21	Anna Lazarus
08/24	Wolfe Glaser
08/24	Carol Graves
08/24	Laura McConnell
08/26	Evan Cunningham
08/26	Xóchitl Mota-Back
08/26	Theresa Veatch
08/27	W. Courtland Robinson
08/28	Susan Flanigan
08/28	Andy Imparato
08/29	Anna Hughes
08/29	Oliver Schmickel
08/30	Sharon Lucas
08/31	Gareth Imparato
08/31	Henry Waldron

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

## Soaring Eagles *continued from page 9*

healthy treats; 3) Hands on Science, where students conducted interesting interactive experiments; 4) Creative Expressions, where students reacted to their life experiences through writing and art; 5) LEGO Robotics, where students enjoyed constructing and testing their creations; 6) and Math Games, where students practiced math skills in enjoyable ways.

Volunteers served as group leaders, counselors and learning station teachers. The days started and ended with nutritious breakfasts and lunches served by Brown volunteers.

SELC featured a mid-week Outdoor Education Day at beautiful Woodberry Crossing where the children fed farm animals, waded in a stream, played outdoor games and consumed 240 hotdogs and countless s'mores. The campers' families joined us for the final day of camp, and a farewell luncheon was served.

Thanks to all the adults and youth who served as volunteers and/or con-



tributed money or new books to help make this magical week possible. Start planning your calendars now for next year's Learning Camp, traditionally scheduled for the final week of June. Also, for those of you just learning about this important church mission, please consider volunteer work, and/or donations of new books (pre-K to grade 5), as well as monetary gifts for books, teaching materials, food, transportation and other supplies. ♦

## Construction Report

by Betsy Nix

The demolition phase of the Fellowship Building project is complete. A hazmat team removed asbestos in the basement and lead throughout the building before work began. During the demo, Marani discovered a secret fireplace in the kitchen, original brick in the Assembly Room and a beautiful pocket door that had been hidden in the wall leading to the kitchen.

Whenever we can, we save original details and find new uses for old items. A cleaning firm employed dry ice to peel decades-old tar from the exposed brick, and our design-build team will repurpose the pocket door on the first-floor storage area. A portion of the ceiling beadboard in the Assembly Room was salvaged for resale. We were able to find people who wanted to re-use the kitchen stainless steel tables, gas stove and refrigerators.

Our organ curator Michael Hart is expanding the basement organ blower



room for better circulation and easier access for maintenance and repairs.

In early July, Marani poured the foundation for the elevator shaft spanning the first to the third floors, providing access to education rooms, the nursery and the Brown Memorial Tutoring Program. The courtyard entrance will be fully accessible with an automated opening mechanism, so a person using a wheelchair can enter the building and access the elevator independently.

After worship on July 1, construction team members led groups through the site. Progress is well underway in the gender-neutral bathroom on the first floor. You can see the framing for the multiple stalls, including an accessible stall, the changing station, and the central sink and mirror. Look for announcements of more Sunday tours in the coming months.

We are looking towards a completion date of Christmas Eve 2018. The construction team meets every other week with the design-build team, and we welcome questions or comments. ♦

## Brown Memorial Tutoring Program

by Amy Munds

Driving around our beautiful city, I was made aware of how much we depend on the ability to read in order to navigate the roadways, railways and advertising world. Words are all around us, yet so many are still unable to read. An alarming 2016 report showed only 11 percent of Baltimore City's fourth graders were reading at grade level. Because of lack of exposure to reading and specialized instruction, many are growing up unable to read and write. Yet, they are then expected to function as adults in this literary world we live in.

At Brown Memorial Tutoring, we strive to reach struggling readers at an early age. Using the Orton Gillingham system, tutors provide systematic instruction that leads children to understand the reading process they may not have grasped otherwise. Our goal is to help develop a lifetime love of reading, providing our students with the knowledge they need to navigate their world.

Do you have a love of reading and a desire to impart that gift to a young learner? Consider becoming a volunteer tutor with our program. We train and guide along the way. Not enough time? Consider donating financially to support the efforts of the Brown Memorial Tutoring program as we reach out to up to 90 students per year in the Baltimore. Visit [www.browntutoring.org](http://www.browntutoring.org) and consider joining our initiative in a way that suits you. ♦

**TUTORING OPENING DAY** Sept. 12 • **TUTOR TRAINING** Sept. 13, 17-18  
**FIRST DAY FOR STUDENTS:** Oct. 8



## September Birthdays

09/01	Catherine Sewell
09/02	Monica Rakowski
09/02	Mary Randall
09/02	Gregory Trimble
09/03	Hilda Imhoff
09/04	James E. Cox
09/04	Ang Robinson
09/08	Amy Dahl
09/09	Nicole Mitchell
09/10	Azra Sara Bartell
09/10	Jacqueline L. Cole
09/10	Micheline McManus
09/11	Kathryn Arnold
09/12	Susan Stroupe
09/13	Emma Fesperman
09/14	John Burton
09/14	Youngmi Organ
09/16	Nannette Mitchell
09/16	Karen Nelson
09/16	Jody Shaw
09/16	Linell Smith
09/18	Amy Munds
09/20	Trevor Bishai
09/22	Lynn Clippinger
09/22	Dylan Smith
09/24	Luke Clippinger
09/24	Barbara Hull Francis
09/24	Ed Richardson
09/25	Jack Burton
09/25	Mia Goodwin Davis
09/25	Sabine Goodwin Davis
09/25	Grace Peng
09/26	Salvatore Pappalardo
09/28	Keiffer Mitchell, Jr.
09/28	Donna Senft
09/28	Jim Veatch
09/29	Elizabeth Garcia-Bunuel
09/29	Lisa Hoffberger



# BMPA Calendar

*Alive in the City  
and the World*

The New Church Year  
Begins Sunday Sept. 9

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

**Every Sunday, "MOTHRAA"**  
**Meditation on the Hill Reading Al-**  
**coholics 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, Al-Anon Family**  
**Group, 7:30 p.m.** Church House Parlor.  
Open to family and friends of problem  
drinkers.

**Aug. 21 & Sept. 18, Theology on**  
**Tap, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** Motor House, 120  
W. North Avenue. Casual discussion on  
theological topics. The topics are TBA.  
Contact Chip at cmorganriegel@gmail.  
com for more information. [Note: Theol-  
ogy on Tap is now the third Tuesday of  
every month.]

**Aug. 26, Soulful Revue Sunday, 10**  
**a.m.** Sanctuary. The Soulful Revue music  
ensemble will lead the music for worship.

**Aug. 26, Escape Room Adven-**  
**tures, 6 p.m.** More information is com-  
ing about this Youth Group activity.

**Sept. 6, Chancel Choir Rehearsal,**  
7 p.m. Rehearsals resume for the church  
year in the Sanctuary.

**Sept. 9, Rally Day & Potluck Pic-**  
**nic, 11 a.m.** Sanctuary and Church Front  
Steps. *See page 1 for details.*

**Sept. 12-13 & 17-18, Tutoring**  
**Program Opening Day and**  
**Training, Church House.**

**Sept. 20, Prayer Shawl Ministry, 1-3**  
**p.m.** Enjoy support and fellowship while  
making prayer shawls for those in need.  
This month's meeting is at the home of  
Dianne Ross. Contact  
rossinbalt@verizon.net for info.

**Sept. 23, Post Worship Event:**  
**Responding to the Opioid Crisis,**  
12:30 p.m. Sanctuary. *See page 5 for details.*

**Sept. 25, Environmental Talk, 7**  
**p.m.** Sanctuary. *See page 4 for details.*

**Sept. 28-30, Youth Hiking Week-**  
**end.** *See page 5 for details.*

**Sept. 29, All Church Picnic.** Pen  
Mar Park, Washington County. *See page 5*  
*for details, with more information to come.*

**SAVE THE DATE: Oct. 21, Tiffany**  
**Series Concert, 3 p.m.** Sanctuary. The  
Tiffany Series will present the Peabody  
Jazz Faculty Concert.

## 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 article to submit to the*  
*Tidings? Email Jennifer Michael,*  
*jmichael@browndowntown.org.*  
*Due dates this year: Sept. 10*  
*(Oct./Nov. issue), Dec. 1 (Jan./Feb.*  
*issue), Feb. 10 (Mar/Apr. issue),*  
*Apr. 10 (May/June/July issue)*

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