

Tidings

MAR/APR 2019

Pastor's Reflections

by **Andrew Foster Connors**
Senior Pastor

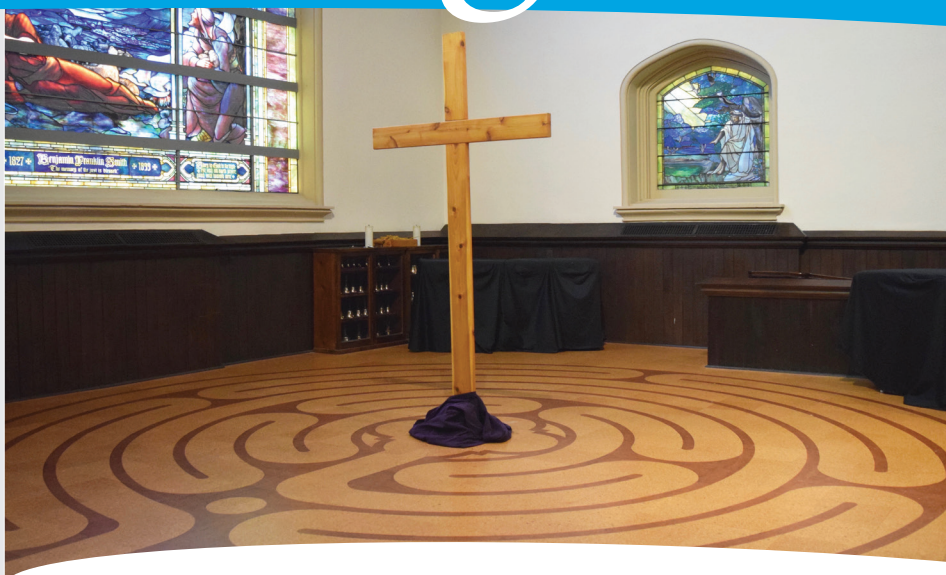


The third chapter of Joshua tells the story of the Israelites preparing to enter the Promised Land. They have come to the Jordan River under new leadership. The mantle has been passed from Moses to Joshua. For Joshua, there's a lot at stake. Can he do as well as his predecessor?

Preparing to cross over the Jordan River, he gives the people the game plan—when you see the Ark of the Covenant (remember that golden thing from “Raiders of the Lost Ark” with the Ten Commandments inside?), “follow it, so that you may know the way you should go, for you have not passed this way before.”

I've been thinking a lot recently about what it means to live in a time where the paths don't seem well worn. Facing the dangerous obstacles to peace in our city—unprecedented corruption in our police department, drug overdose deaths that are three times the rate of the rest of the state, generational inequities in school funding, and a poverty rate,

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LENT 2019: Rhythms for the Journey

Lately, it's not uncommon to hear frustration, anxiety and fatigue deeply felt in the face of both the daily news cycle and the never ending road to justice. So what are we to do in the midst of these intense times? The hymn "God Be With You Til We Meet Again" suggests that “when life's perils thick confound you, put unfailing arms around you.”

This Lent we invite you to join us as we explore this idea through practices that help strengthen us for the journey ahead. Each week we will highlight a different theme—Boundaries – Saying Yes, Saying No; Discernment; Healing; Hospitality; Honoring the Body; Singing; Shaping Community—to focus our spiritual practices on beginning in the education hour, followed by worship and then continued throughout the week with devotions and suggested actions around the week's theme. ♦

Read about Lent and Holy Week activities and services on pages 8-9 ➞

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Holy Week Schedule: Our services and activities Apr. 14-21. See page 9.

Spotlight on David Gray: He likes to get his hands dirty. See page 3.

Tiffany Series: Hear one of New York's renowned organists. See page 4.

Picture Page: A look back at Michele Ward's installation. See page 13.

Pastor's Reflections

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entrenched at outrageous levels, that matches Baltimore's once legally enforced segregation lines. We've never been here before. This is true for the church in Baltimore City as well. Many, many congregations are at a make or break level—closing at precisely the moment when we need organized people of faith to step into the many gaps and lead. We've never been here before.

Yet while this statement is literally true for us, just as it was true for Joshua and his people, the truth is that Israel had done this kind of thing before. Israel had crossed the Red Sea, a much, much larger feat. The historic memory of God's faithfulness to them was more than adequate to guide their crossing. It seems to me that to be on the move, Israel had to shed unnecessary things while treasuring and trusting their necessary things even more. This is hard work. Sometimes it's not easy to discern what's essential. Even after you have discerned what is not, it's still hard to let it go.

As I write this, I'm frantically packing (last minute) for Cuba. My suitcase has to come in under 50 pounds. That would be easy if not for the 35 pounds of gifts that are already packed. Yet even with the remaining space, I know from previous journeys that I often pack more than what I need. The most important ways that I will meet God on this trip are most decidedly not determined by what's in my suitcase. In fact, taking too much stuff will make it hard to move about. It may even create unnecessary anxieties about protecting my stuff. Better to stay light so I can go wherever our hosts want to take us.

Lent will be here soon. I normally shun the idea of "giving things up." It's become fashionable in church circles to talk about "taking things on." I like that move. Yet, as the challenges in church and city life grow, we can't avoid the truth that in order to take on the right assignments, in order to pack the essentials for what we need to cross on over, we're going to have to make room. We have to let go of what we no longer need. This is not a process that will end at the end of 40 days in Lent. The waters we are in are too deep for that. But it can begin for you and me.

My hope is that it will continue to deepen as we move closer toward the "new wineskins" sabbatical program that begins in May. Learning to let things go that hold us back is a spiritual discipline that leads to a freedom that comes from learning to trust God. I'm excited to deepen this discipline together in Lent and continue to reflect on it more guided by the activities planned in my portion of the sabbatical. And I'm excited to know that the congregation will also be exploring these kinds of questions together over the summer under Michele Ward's leadership. ♦



andrew@browndowntown.org



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

Use CCB for Online Giving and Statements

by David Nyweide

Have you ever tried giving to Brown Memorial through the internal church website, CCB (Creating Connections at Brown)? Or have you ever looked up your giving history?

CCB enables you to give to different areas of church life either as a one-time gift or a repeating gift or pledge. After logging into CCB, click on "Give" on the left side of the main page. There, you can give to the current year's operating fund, the capital campaign, the Tutoring Program, or to other special causes.

CCB tracks your giving streams, and you can display

them for different time periods. Plus, you can save paper—and work for our financial administrator—by looking up your giving history through CCB instead of being mailed a giving statement. Email Sharon Lucas (slucas@browndowntown.org) to request stopping mailed giving statements.

Login into CCB directly at <https://browndowntown-ccbchurch.com>. Or visit the church website at www.browndowntown.org, scroll to the bottom of the page and click on the green box that says, "CCB." ♦

Spotlight on Staff

After an exhaustive search to find just the right person, the trustees were delighted to hire David Gray as our new facilities manager. He comes to us through his association with one of our trustees who recognized the quality of his work, his attention to details and his obvious passion for a job-well-done.

by Beth Gregory



David Gray's interest in restoration projects has made him a perfect fit for our beloved, but aging, older building as facilities manager. As David says, "I like to get my hands dirty."

With an impressive work history, David is highly qualified for his new role. He has a background in general business and operation management that includes general accounting, inventory control, personnel, administration and project management. He has more than five years of experience in commercial and residential electrical field work and operations management, and more than 10 years of experience in project management, such as managing company and subcontracted resources. He has degrees, including masters certificates from Anne Arundel Community College and George Washington University. David honored

our country by serving three years in the U.S. Army and is a Vietnam Veteran.

David has taken over all of the roles and responsibilities carried out by Rob Brown, our former facilities manager. Some of these include advising the trustees on building and capital projects, establishing priorities for work to be done and managing contractors and projects. He will also complete in-house system repairs and maintenance, when possible. Dave will be meeting with our staff to make sure our church activities run smoothly by ensuring provisions for space needs and access. He will also assist with the development of our Reserve Study that is just getting underway.

Please join the trustees in welcoming David to Brown Memorial's staff. We feel very fortunate to have him. ♦



Looking Back and Looking Ahead

At the annual congregational meeting in January, the 2018 annual report was handed out, highlighting all of the church's activities from the past year, as well as a financial summary. A brochure was also distributed listing the many ways to get involved at Brown. Pick up copies of these documents from the Narthex or download them from browndowntown.org/newsletters.

Music Notes

Don't Miss Upcoming Events This Spring

Renowned New York Organist to Present Tiffany Series Concert

Christopher Creaghan, one of New York's most prominent organists, will present a Tiffany Series concert on **Sunday, March 17, at 3 p.m.** A reception in the Assembly Room will follow. "Chris is a splendid musician," said John Walker, Brown Memorial's Minister of Music *Emeritus*. Creaghan is the Associate Organist at the famed Riverside Church, where John was organist for many years.

Creaghan's program is varied, ranging from "Fanfares" by Calvin Hampton, to Fauré's famous "Pavane," to "Night Sky" by Creaghan's wife Nancy Wertsch, a noted composer and mezzo soprano. He will also perform J.S. Bach's "Fantasia and Fugue in G minor," one of Bach's most prestigious compositions.

Of particular note is Creaghan's organ arrangement (transcription) of Mussorgsky's much loved orchestral piece "The Great Gate of Kiev," from *Pictures at an Exhibition*. John Walker notes that it used to be quite common for organists to transcribe orchestral works, but in the last 50 years, it fell out of favor. Now art—which makes the organ into a virtual orchestra—is being restored to its "proper place," according to John. He added that when César Franck was appointed organist at Paris's Ste. Clothilde church in 1870, he said exuberantly, "This organ is my orchestra!" Brown Memorial's organ, with its magnificent variety of sounds, is perfectly suited to such transcriptions.

Tickets are \$20 (\$50 for Patrons). Students get free admission. Tickets can be purchased at the door and at www.browndowntown.org/current-season. Parking in the Mt. Royal Elementary School lot in the 100-block of Mosher Street and free shuttle service to the church will be available. Everyone is invited! ♦



Congratulations John Walker

The American Guild of Organists (AGO) is honoring John Walker, our Minister of Music *Emeritus*, with its Endowment Fund Distinguished Artist Award on April 26 at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. John will give a free recital that evening.

John has served 12 years on the AGO's National Council as the Guild's president, vice president and treasurer. The April 26 recital begins at 7:30 p.m., followed by a gala reception to benefit the AGO Endowment Fund. **Tickets are \$150. To purchase tickets or make a tax-deductible contribution in honor of John, visit agohq.org/2019-gala, email gala@agohq.org, or call 212-870-2311.** ♦



Concert to Benefit Maurice Murphy Scholarship Fund

Come out and enjoy an evening of wonderful music to recognize the legacy of Dr. A. Maurice Murphy, and to benefit a scholarship fund in his name on **Sunday, April 28, at 4 p.m.**

The Dr. A. Maurice Murphy Memorial Scholarship Concert is a fundraiser to raise money for a Baltimore City High School senior to attend a university/college as a music major. The student will receive a renewable scholarship for four years.

The concert will include the A. Maurice Murphy Chorale, former singers and students of Dr. Murphy, Dr. Mickey Thomas Terry, Concert Organist, and Dr. Ernest Ragogini, Concert Pianist. Tom Hall will be the guest conductor. Vocal music by Mozart, Rossini, Handel and others. ♦

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:

■ Met with The James Company staff (fundraising consultants) to create a plan to complete fundraising for the construction project. Members who have not already pledged to support the project will be offered an opportunity to do so; an additional phase of fundraising will take place closer to 2021 (when the current pledge period expires) to invite members to extend their pledge or add a new one. The additional amount needed to finish funding the project is estimated to be \$415,000 (varies depending on interest paid).

■ David Bielenberg, Lynda Burton and Peggy Obrecht have been sorting boxes of church records that had been stored in Brown Woodbrook. The group is preparing to ship ma-

terials to the Presbyterian Archives in Philadelphia, but they are holding onto materials from the 100th anniversary for use in Brown's 150th anniversary celebrations in 2020.

■ Approved amendments to the Endowment & Investment Policy Statement to include: "A tertiary investment objective is for the Endowment investments to reflect the Church's mission and values where possible and while maintaining the same investment standards." This allows the Investment Committee to review its portfolio annually with an eye to socially responsible investing. Specifically, the policy seeks to avoid investing in companies that derive more than 5% of their revenue from weapons/firearms or nuclear weapons, or companies that operate for-profit prisons.

■ Approved a 2.25% cost of living raise for all staff in 2019.

■ Approved the 2019 budget with income and expenses at \$1,093,264, including \$640,000 expected from "plate & pledge" contributions from congregants—a 7% increase over the budgeted contributions in 2018.

■ Created a work group to update the "Facility Use Policy," to include information about who, how and when non-Brown groups or individuals can use the Fellowship Hall. This topic will also be considered by Session at the annual Session Retreat (3/30).

■ Thanked outgoing elders for completing their term of service: Stephen Ruckman, David Bielenberg, Anna Connors, Steedman Jenkins and Annie Schindler.

■ Formed a work group to review emergency preparedness for the church, including medical and other emergencies. ♦

Welcome New Members



Al & Ellen Fisher

Al and Ellen moved to Baltimore last May from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where Al was a professor of sociology at Coe College and Ellen was a computer systems analyst for the Cedar Rapids Public Schools. They moved because their son and his family live here. Both Al and Ellen were elders and deacons at First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Rapids. Al co-authored a history of that congregation's first 150 years, and Ellen was the church's volunteer coordinator for Family Promise, a program in which local congregations house homeless persons in their buildings. In the wider community, Al served as president of an interfaith organization, while Ellen chaired the local CROP Hunger Walk for 33 years. Al is now volunteering for Gilchrist Hospice, and Ellen is volunteering in Brown's Tutoring Program. They have attended worship at Brown since mid-June and appreciate the church's strong preaching, music and commitment to the Baltimore community. They

are grateful for the opportunity to join you as you strive to do God's work here.



Ed & Gail Hambleton, Thomas Paine

Ed and Gail were married at Brown Memorial in 2013. They both have work histories in the arts—Ed as an actor, and Gail as a classical musician. Thus, the "beauty of life" is most important to them. Currently Ed is working in the wireless industry as a sales representative for AT&T, and Gail in an international NGO, Global Peace Foundation, working on inter-religious and community peacebuilding. Ed and Gail recently relocated from Fairfax, Virginia, to Baltimore. Ed previously lived in Timonium and worked in Baltimore as a CASA (Court Ap-

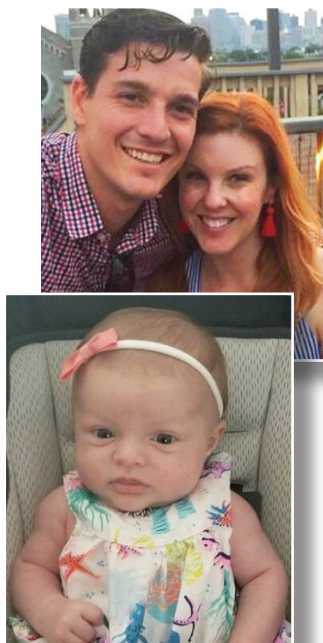
pointed Special Advocate) volunteer with youth in the foster care system. Ed and Gail have a "well blended" family of four kids and a large beloved extended family. Gail's son, Thomas, has just moved back home from Portland, Oregon, and will be staying in Baltimore for some time. They feel blessed to have been led to Brown Memorial, and look forward to becoming an active part of this community of faith.



Lyndsay, Matthew & Hazel Taylor

The Taylor family relocated to Baltimore over the summer. They previously lived in the D.C. metro area for six years. Matt and Lyndsay were born and raised in Southern California, and they just celebrated their ninth wedding anniversary. Lyndsay earned her master's degree in public relations and communications from Georgetown and works (mostly remotely) at the intersection of project management and faculty relations at Georgetown University. Matt holds a master of arts in theology degree

from Fuller Seminary and a Ph.D. in Islam and Christianity from Georgetown. He is currently the Protestant Scholar at the Institute for Islamic, Christian and Jewish Studies, an interfaith dialogue institute located in Towson. While they were both raised in the evangelical world, over the past decade Matt and Lyndsay have found a theological home in the reformed PC(USA) tradition, serving as lay leaders at Georgetown Presbyterian Church. They have a daughter, Hazel Mae, who is 2.5 years old, and an infant son Abraham (Abe) Gravis, born in January.



Gerald De Leon & Samuel Versey

Gerald and Sam are from the Baltimore and Annapolis area. They found Brown Memorial in October and have felt like a part of the community ever since. Gerald and Sam are excited to start their journey as official members of Brown Memorial.

Ally, Ted & Cora Vitale

Ted and Ally moved to Baltimore in 2015 and live in Fells Point with their dogs and nine month old daughter, Cora. They feel very grateful to have found Brown and are excited to raise their daughter here and become an active part of the community.



Andrew & Miranda Williams

Andrew and Miranda moved to Baltimore with their daughter Beatrice in November 2017 from Roanoke, Virginia, for new job opportunities. They have been married for nine

years, and have lived in the DC area as well as Raleigh, North Carolina, during that time. Andrew is originally from Raleigh, and is a graduate of North Carolina State University. He works for the Maryland Department of Education. Miranda is a native of Southwest Virginia and graduated from Virginia Tech with a master's in English Literature. She works as a technical writer for a defense contractor. Andrew and Miranda were both raised in evangelical traditions and are grateful to have found a loving and inclusive church that doesn't hesitate to stand up to social injustice and inequality. Their daughter, Beatrice Ruby, is 18 months old and was baptized at Brown Memorial last November.



Andi Zumbrum

Andi is joining via Letter of Transfer from Manassas Presbyterian Church in Manassas, Virginia. Andi has been a long-time visitor (and choir member) at Brown Memorial, and is so excited to become an official member of a welcoming and vital church community. She currently works at the Maryland Department of Health. ♦



Lenten Activities & Worship Services

Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, March 5, 6:30 pm

Gather in the Assembly Room for pancakes, games for all ages and the 3rd Annual Brown Memorial vs. Memorial Episcopal pancake relay race. The record is one all. RSVP to Rachel Cunningham, rachel@browndowntown.org, by March 3. Come at 5:30 to help cook.

Ash Wednesday Tri-Church Service of Worship

Wednesday, March 6, 7:30 pm

"From dust you came, and to dust you will return." We gather with our sisters and brothers from Corpus Christi Catholic Church and Memorial Episcopal Church for an annual ecumenical service of worship featuring the combined choirs of all three churches. This year's service will be held at Corpus Christi.

Singing For The Soul Wednesdays, March 20, April 10, 5:30-6:30 pm

A monthly gathering to sing and experience a variety of inspirational chants, folk music and classic tunes, including melodies from the Taizé Community in France. No printed music will be distributed, and no musical training is required. All gatherings are in the Labyrinth.

Ecumenical Worship Services

**Wednesdays, March 6-April 17
at Noon, Union Baptist
Church, 1201 Druid Hill Ave.**

Join with our brothers and sisters across West Baltimore for a noon-time service of worship followed by a light lunch. These ecumenical services of worship were birthed decades ago as a response to the 1968 riots and are an important part of our continued dialogue on race, the church and the city.

Tri-Church Education Series "A Priest, A Minister and a Pastor Walk into a..."

**Wednesdays at Brown
March 20, 27, April 10
Dinner 6:30 pm, Service 7-8**

You don't usually associate comedy with Lent, but humor is often a good way to highlight some of the most troubling and difficult parts of our traditions and bring them to light. Join us this season as Father Marty, Rev. Grey and Pastor Foster Connors each look at how their traditions are portrayed in comedy, cinema and television to explore what some of our biggest sins are as traditions and how we can become better reflections of the Church and of Jesus going forward.

Weekly Prayer Opportunities

**Prayer Service, Thursdays,
March 7-April 4, 5:30 pm**

As you move from the busyness of your day into evening activities, 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.

Road To Recovery Love Letter Writing Workshop

Wednesday, April 3, 6:30 pm

Peter Bruun, curator for the Beyond Beautiful One Thousand Love Letters Project, will facilitate a love letter writing workshop as part of our ongoing work to aid in the opioid crisis. These letters are not necessarily about addiction; they are about the power and impact of love in our lives. Bruun is an artist and activist working to end the stigma often associated with addiction. He will transform some of the letters from our community into pieces of art, working towards the completion of 1,000 depictions of love letters in visual form. A light dinner of soup, salad and bread is from 6:30-7 p.m. Program runs 7-8:30 p.m.



Holy Week Activities & Worship Services

Palm Sunday Branches & Brunch Sunday, April 14

We gather with Corpus Christi Catholic and Memorial Episcopal churches 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, April 14, 5:30 – 8 pm

Our monthly gathering for middle and high school youth will feature prayer stations focused on Jesus' walk toward the cross. Join us in the Assembly Room for dinner and conversation.

Taize Prayer Service & Theology on Tap Tuesday, April 16, 6:30 pm

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 Blue Pit BBQ (1601 Union Avenue) where we'll be discussing Holy Week and its impact on our walk towards the cross.

Maunday Thursday Contemplative Worship & Communion Service

April 18, 5:30–7:30 pm

A simple meal of soup, salad and bread is served at 5:30 p.m., followed by a contemplative worship experience. Communion is served. There is no charge for this meal but we do need volunteers to help provide the meal. Share your favorite soup, salad or bread with the congregation. Choir rehearsal begins at 7:30 p.m. Childcare for infants and toddlers is available upon request for this service. Contact Rachel Cunningham, rachel@browndowntown.org, if you can help with the meal or would like childcare. To help us with the headcount, RSVP to Rachel by April 16.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service Friday, April 19, 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, April 20 10 am – Noon

We will decorate the sanctuary in preparation for Easter. Help turn our sacred space into a spring garden.

Easter Sunrise Service Sunday, April 21, 6 am

It's become tradition to join Light Street Presbyterian Church for a sunrise service in Federal Hill. The sight of daylight breaking over Baltimore is a spectacular backdrop to a simple service of witness to Christ's resurrection. Hunting Ridge Presbyterian Church will also join us. Gather for songs, liturgy, prayers and good news. Breakfast at Light Street Presbyterian Church follows.

Easter Sunday, April 21, 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.



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

Brown Memorial Tutoring Program

Study Space Gets a Makeover

by Rob Kasper

When one student from Mount Royal Elementary School arrived in the newly renovated third floor of Fellowship Hall for her weekly tutoring session, she was filled with wonder. Eyeing the bright green carpet where she and other students sat in a circle and the beams of sunlight that streamed through the new windows she exclaimed, “It feels like a picnic!”

Another Mount Royal student, a fourth-grader, was so taken with the new space that he announced that someday—when he had money—he was going to buy the place.

Such expressions of praise and appreciation were commonly heard, if variously expressed, recently as the 84 students and 72 tutors in the Brown Memorial Tutoring Program became acquainted with their renovated space.

The remodeling of the tutoring space was part of a two-year, \$1.4 million modernization project undertaken by the Brown Memorial congregation and completed Christmas Eve. In addition to refurbishing the tutoring space, improvements were made on the first and second floors of the church’s Fellowship Building, on the South tower of the church and on the historic Skinner organ. Goals of the renovation, according to Senior Pastor Andrew Foster Connors, were to “make our spaces fully accessible to our growing congregation, to improve safety and



to make our environmental footprint a little lighter.”

Betsy Nix, co-chair of the church’s construction committee, observed that “renovating an historic structure is an exercise in sustainability. In addition, we worked to repurpose items whenever we could.” For instance, she noted, when the contractors found a pocket door hidden in a kitchen wall, they used it as decoration in another part of the building.

Martha Socolar, director of the tutoring program, said she was

grateful “that the church very generously included the tutoring program in the renovation plans.”

For tutors, the biggest plus of the makeover is that the building now has an elevator, Socolar said.

“Every year we would lose tutors who could no longer climb the three flights of stairs,” Socolar said. Now, she said, tutors with troubled legs can ride the elevator to and from their third-floor sessions.

Frank Dittenhafer II, the architect of the project, noted in a post on his firm’s website that putting

elevators in old buildings is one of its “specialties.” “We have considerable experience inserting elevators in older, historic buildings,” he wrote. “It takes some real care so that it’s done without compromising the historic integrity of significant components. Fortunately we were able to help.” Dittenhafer’s firm worked with A. R. Marani General Contractors on the project.

Other welcome improvements in the tutoring space, Socolar said, are new desks, shelves, chairs and office furnishings secured by a \$19,000 grant from the France-Merrick Foundation. The new furniture, coupled with smart design—heat for instance now comes from vents tucked in the ceiling instead of old noisy radiators—make for a more pleasant and efficient learning environment, she said.

“The new space allows our students, many of whom have attention problems, to have more freedom to move about. They can walk over and use the white boards that are on the walls in the tutoring rooms, or they can sit on pillows with their tutors in the window sills and read books. There is much less rigidity than we had before,” Socolar said.

The move into the revamped space comes after the tutoring program spent the past months working out of the top floor of the Church House. There space was tight and occupants of the other offices in the building tolerated the twice a day migration of students going up and down the structure’s wooden steps. Initially some of the Church House workers were concerned that the parade of children would be disruptive, Pastor Connors said. But they grew

to like it, he said, and now miss the sound of children’s laughter.

A ceremony celebrating the tutoring space renovation is set for April 7 at 12:30 p.m. It will feature remarks by Tamara Hanson, principal of Dorothy I. Height Elementary School, refreshments, tours of remodeled rooms and elevator rides. ♦



Accessibility Highlights

We've made worshipping and visiting easier.

by Gayle Barney

IN THE SANCTUARY

Doors: Please take note that the outside door entering the newly-renovated Fellowship Hall and Assembly Room is fully handicapped-accessible. Once in the door you can easily enter the church as well. It is also a convenient way to get to the church or Fellowship Hall from the Church House. From the sidewalk when facing the church in the front, turn left, then take an immediate right prior to the Church House. Walk back to the Fellowship Hall handicapped door.

The second handicapped entrance is on the right side of the church. After temporarily stopping your car in the alley off Lafayette Street, your passenger can enter this door with assistance, take the first left, and walk or wheel down the hallway into the sanctuary. Ushers and greeters are available at both doors.

Pew Cuts: Once in the church, there are pew cuts available in three places in the sanctuary. These are areas for persons in wheelchairs, service dogs and/or walkers. There are chairs in these areas so that friends and family can sit alongside persons needing a pew cut. The areas where pews have been removed are on the left and the right sides, as well as

across the back of the sanctuary.

Bulletins and Hearing Assistive Devices:

Large print bulletins and hearing assistive devices are available at the back of the sanctuary on a table as you start down the middle aisle.

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Fellowship Hall and Assembly Room:

In the back of the Assembly Room, near the kitchen, you can take an elevator to all floors of the Fellowship Hall. Our kitchen also features wheel chair accessible counters, sinks and appliances. An accessible, gender-neutral bathroom is available as you enter the Assembly Room.

Church House:

A ramp is available in the back of the Church House. You can ring into the front office from the front of the Church House to gain assistance in entering through the handicapped entrance in the back.

Parking and Van Service:

Parking is available at the Mount Royal Elementary School (121 McMechen St.). Free shuttle service between the parking lot and the



church is available. The driver can assist with van entry and exit. Be sure to get a required, printed parking pass for your car. See one of the blue Welcome Folders in the pews for a pass, or download a pass from browndowntown.org/contact-us.

Any questions or to report barriers of any kind, contact Page Campbell at pagerini@peoplepc.com. ♦

PICTURE PAGE

Photos by Dever Cunningham

The January 13 installation of Associate Pastor Michele Ward.





March Birthdays

03/04	Annie Obrecht
03/04	Susan Schindler
03/06	Ryan Artes
03/07	Rosa Brown
03/07	Tida Nelson
03/08	Aidan Connors
03/11	Rees Richardson
03/11	Dianne Ross
03/13	Joanne Egan
03/14	Lucy Hand
03/14	Ken Mills
03/14	Michele Ward
03/15	Ellen Edrington
03/15	Liam McConnell
03/15	Don Peeples
03/16	Jonathan Barnes
03/17	Chel Cavallon
03/19	Martha Bishai
03/19	Sarah Diehl
03/20	Nick Reed
03/21	Ryan Kelly
03/21	Ellison Warmath
03/22	Melissa Riorda
03/23	Ben Bobango
03/23	Nell Robinson
03/23	Steve Ruckman
03/23	Sarah Seipp-Williams
03/26	Kenna Mitchell
03/26	Carol Newill
03/26	Sarah Ramirez Cross
03/26	Rick Thomas
03/29	Erin Anderson
03/29	Olivia Babb



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

Finding Common Ground at the STORY SLAM

by Susan Stroupe

What's a risk you've taken that has paid off? This was the question that gathered folks of multiple backgrounds and generations in our new, beautiful Assembly Room, to "take leaps of faith" by opening up their lives to other community members at Brown, some of whom they knew well, and some of whom they got to know through this sharing of stories.

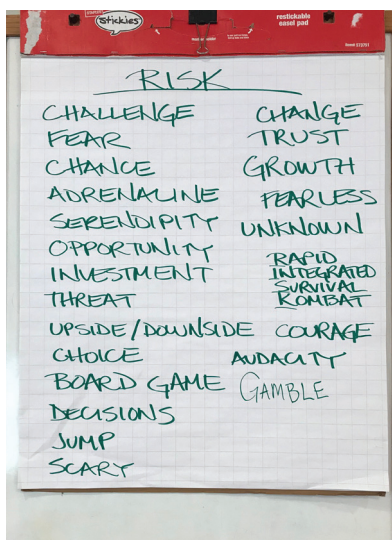
In Brown's first Story Slam on Feb. 10, about 45 long-time members, newer members, regular attendees and visitors made space for each person at their table to share a three-minute story, uninterrupted, about a moment in their life they took a risk that resulted in a great success.

Many of us know the power of storytelling already, but many of us are also reluctant to share our whole selves in our church setting, and this Story Slam (hopefully the first of many!), was a chance to, as one participant noted, practice "a skill I need to exercise." Other participants were moved by "hearing thoughts and experiences from different generations of people," and were surprised at how it helped them "understand different interpretations of risk," and "realize all of the experiences I've also taken risks with."

And it's always nice to hear about the parts of our histories that don't always show up at church, as one person noted, "I love hearing about the adventures of people. The stories that are kind of crazy, and kind of unbelievable are my favorites."

Come hear more adventures of the Brown community at the second Story Slam on March 10 after church, where we will be linking our question to our Lent thematic series. Like our first venture, we'll be joined by special guest R. Eric Thomas, host of *The Moth* DC and senior writer for *Elle*.

We will continue to take the kinds of risks that draw us together as, in the words of one participant, "an old church, a living presence, a glorious future!" ♦



About 45 people attended the first Story Slam.



Take a tour of Brown Anytime, from Anywhere

Take our new cell phone audio tour and learn more about the sanctuary's Tiffany and stained-glass windows, wood carvings, Skinner pipe organ and labyrinth. No apps need to be downloaded. Simply dial 410-630-4298, from any style phone, and punch through 30 audio stops. The stops are numbered throughout the sanctuary and a map is available in the back of the church to help guide you.



April Birthdays

- 04/02 Jack Hodges
- 04/03 Drew Johnston
- 04/03 Ruskin Nohe-Moren
- 04/05 Andy Clay Johnston
- 04/06 Hannah Bobango
- 04/06 Shannon Bobango
- 04/06 Elizabeth Nash
- 04/06 Jim Schuman
- 04/07 George Bareford
- 04/07 Liz Bowie Fesperman
- 04/07 Ed Hambleton
- 04/07 Jake Schindler
- 04/08 Rachel Smith
- 04/08 Larry Fletcher-Hill
- 04/09 Jim Williams
- 04/11 Sarah Egan
- 04/11 William Egan
- 04/11 Lucille McCarthy
- 04/11 Jeanne Thomas
- 04/12 Ernie Imhoff
- 04/12 Grace Todd
- 04/13 Annalisa Jenkins
- 04/13 James Cavallon
- 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 Clementine Hensley
- 04/25 Red Finney
- 04/25 Amy Schmickel
- 04/26 Chloe Cheseldine
- 04/27 Andrew Foster Connors
- 04/29 Freddie Courpas
- 04/29 Jean Savina
- 04/29 David Schmickel
- 04/30 Katherine 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.

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 of whether or not one identifies as an alcoholic.

Every Monday, Meditation on the Hill for Women-AA Meeting, 6:15 p.m. Church House parlor. An open Alcoholics Anonymous meeting.

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, Hope on the Hill AI Anon Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Church House Parlor. Open to family and friends of problem drinkers.

Mar. 5, Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper, 6:30 p.m. Assembly Room. *Details on page 8.*

Mar. 6, Ash Wednesday Tri-Church Service of Worship, 7:30 p.m. Corpus Christi Church. *Details on page 8.*

Wednesdays Mar. 6-Apr. 17, Ecumenical Worship Services, 12 p.m. Union Baptist Church. *Details on page 8.*

Mar. 10, Story Slam: Push the Limit, 12:30 p.m. Assembly Room. Come hear and tell stories over lunch. Co-hosted by guest R. Eric Thomas, Baltimore native, host of The Moth DC, and senior writer for *Elle*, and Susan Stroupe, our resident teaching artist, actor and storyteller. Prepare to answer, "When is a time you pushed the limit?"

Mar. 17, Tiffany Series Organ Concert: Chris Creaghan, 3 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 19, Theology on Tap, 7:30 p.m. Blue Pitt Barbeque. Contact Chip, cmorganriegel@gmail.com to confirm date and topic.

Mar. 21 & April 18, Prayer Shawl Ministry, 1-3 p.m. Enjoy support and fellowship while making prayer shawls for those in need. Contact Dianne Ross at rossinbalt@verizon.net for more information about location and to confirm dates.

Mar. 24, Sunday Night Live, 5:30-8 p.m. SNL goes off site this week to Stoneleigh Lanes (6703 York Rd, Baltimore, MD 21212)! Join us for pizza and duckpin bowling. \$10 per person.

Mar. 20, April 10, Singing for the Soul, 5:30-6:30 p.m. *Details page 8.*

Mar. 20, 27 Apr. 10, Tri-Church Education Series, 6:30 p.m. Brown Memorial. *Details page 8.*

Apr. 3, Road to Recovery Love Letter Writing Workshop, 6:30 p.m. *Details on page 8.*

Apr. 14, Palm Sunday Branches & Brunch, 9:45 a.m. *Details on page 8.*

Apr. 14, "Palm Sunday" Night Live, 5:30-8 p.m. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 16, Taize & Tap, 6:30 p.m. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 18, Maundy Thursday Service, 5:30-7:30 p.m. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 19, Good Friday, Tenebrae Service, 7:30 p.m. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 20, Easter Decorating, 10 a.m.-noon. Sanctuary. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 21, Easter Sunrise Service, 6 a.m. Federal Hill Park. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 21, Easter, 11 a.m. *Details on page 9.*

Apr. 27, Contemplative Hiking, 9:30 a.m. Gunpowder State Falls Park. Visit the calendar at browndowntown.org for more information.

Apr. 28, Dr. A. Maurice Murphy Memorial Scholarship Concert, 4 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 5.*

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

Michele Ward,
Associate Pastor

Jennifer Michael,
Editor

*To submit Tidings articles, 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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Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)