



Good News from Brown Memorial Park Avenue
Presbyterian Church

Tidings

MAR/APR 2020

Pastor's Reflections

by **Andrew Foster Connors**
Senior Pastor



On a recent chilly day, I was enjoying a delightful time with one of my daughters, replacing the radiator

on her hand-me-down, 240,000-mile vehicle. Changing the radiator in the middle of my south-west Baltimore street made for some unexpectedly wonderful encounters.

There was our mail carrier who reintroduced himself after he and I had met at a neighborhood party. An older woman, impressed that my daughter was interested, said to me, "You need to come and get my son off the couch. He won't do nothing." There was the neighbor who used to do his own car work and offered to loan tools should we need any, another neighbor who I learned refurbishes motorcycles ("I've been riding them since before I had a driver's license!") and the random stranger who drew out an 8" knife blade to help us remove a stuck hose. "Don't worry," he said somewhat reassuringly, "I won't stick you."

I was reminded how, in the midst of

continued on page 2 ➞



Wilderness

LENT 2020

Lent begins in the wilderness. The Spirit guides Jesus into the wilderness where he comes face-to-face with temptation and struggle. Yet, in his 40 days of fasting, resisting and wandering, Jesus is shaped and formed for ministry. Similarly, through the wilderness of Lent, we are invited to surrender to the wild leadings of the Spirit. We rarely enter the wilderness willingly, but hopefully through our wandering we remember who we are and whose we are. The wilderness can become sacred even if it remains dangerous. There is no wilderness space too harsh or threatening for God's love. This Lent, we welcome you to the journey. ♦

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

— INSIDE —

150th Anniversary Year: Let's mark it together. See page 3.

Spotlight on Staff: Meet Facilities Manager Keith Moore, Sr. See page 5.

Lent & Holy Week Schedule: Our services and activities. See page 8-9.

Family Listening Campaign: Parents reflect on their faith. See page 10.

Pastor's Reflections

Continued from Page 1

so many challenges in our public life, most people in most places are very good people—friendly, helpful, neighborly. And yet...at 1:30 p.m. that afternoon our delight was interrupted by the pop, pop, pop of gunfire just a few blocks away. The relative quiet was soon destroyed by the police helicopter, sirens and screeching tires. Three people had been shot, including a 15-year-old boy.

To state the obvious, our city is in crisis. The shootings seem to come daily now and the drugs are unstoppable. Three blocks from where I live, a new heroin market is so active that somebody put it on Google Maps so that out-of-towners could find it easily off I-95. This week a parishioner shared with me how two of her friends had died in overdoses in the same week. It's hard to know which is the greater tragedy—that some of us have given up on the idea that we can deal with pain in any way other than ending life, or that others of us have given up on the idea that we can tackle our biggest public problems together.

This, in a week with the impeachment trial that seems to be more like a rehearsed play whose ending has already been scripted. And on a Tuesday morning in February, our city's current mayor, who committed to meeting with BUILD to discuss his plan for leveraging Kirwan Commission state funding, stood up a group of us. This blatant disrespect from a public official left me angry but also clear that the dysfunction we are experiencing in our public life demands a new kind of citizen engagement from all of us.

In his book, *Theology from the Trenches: Reflections on Urban Ministry*, former Brown Memorial pastor Roger Gench argues that urban congregations that have embraced their God-given callings are destined to find themselves in painful solidarity with the “crucified” neighbor. For this reason, we must understand the calling of the church both as covenantal and cruciform.

“Urban congregations and Christians are called to stand

in covenant relation with God and others at intersections where God is bringing justice, reconciliation, and life out of the crucifixions that litter our landscapes.” “Such a covenant,” he writes, “summons us to relationships with others...not out of charity or patronage, but because we recognize our own vulnerability in that of others, our own fear in theirs, our common experience of alienation, and the violence in us all. In recognizing another's crucifixion, we discern our own—and these are the intersections where God is bringing life...”

It's that intersection that's driving me to join with other members of BUILD at our Mayoral Accountability session scheduled for March 24 at 6:30 p.m. Frankly, I'm less interested in hearing from candidates this year about their own plans for Baltimore. I'm more interested in the strength I think we all receive in standing together at the intersections of our city's crucifixions to remind ourselves that God lives in those intersections, giving us the hope that we need to imagine our way into a future where people who are suffering from addiction get treatment, unemployed neighbors find living wage work, and 15-year-olds look forward to an education not traumatization by gunfire. While it's important that we hear from candidates about their plans, I think we are living in a time when we need them to hear from citizens about our hopes and dreams, our hard work together and our insights about what is needed in our faith communities, schools and neighborhoods to turn Baltimore around.

We talk a lot about justice at Brown Memorial. Here is an opportunity to give life to those words. I hope you will join me at that cruciform intersection where God is able to give us new life. ♦



andrew@browndowntown.org



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

SCAM ALERT

It has come to our attention that another round of fraudulent communications have come out impersonating Andrew. Please be advised, we will never ask for money, gift cards or the like via email or text. Many hackers use email addresses that at first glance appear legitimate because they are very similar. Always double check the email address before opening a communication. Andrew's email address is andrew@browndowntown.org.



Anniversary Year

Let's Mark It Together

by Laura Urban



This anniversary is about process, not product. That's been the motto from Session since last May when we began talking about how to mark Brown Memorial's 150th Anniversary in 2020. We knew that the point wouldn't be to produce a glossy book that would sit on a shelf with a shiny story of our successful past.

Rather, the point would be to re-listen to our own stories. As historian Betsy Nix reminded us, "Honest stories of the past can help inform us about how we can move forward."

The point would also be to invite as many people as possible to produce the anniversary itself—to uncover the stories, to create and build the events, to gather together to be the church in this present day, not just in the past.

So now we are in that Anniversary year, and the invitation is here! Session and staff would like to invite the entire congregation to join in the Anniversary events and activities. There is no one large "Anniversary Committee," but there are many people working to make many parts come alive. We encourage you to sign up to help plan an event, to gather or write some of our history, or participate in the activities.

Here is a brief summary of Anniversary Year highlights. See Gayle Barney (traveltwins@aol.com) to sign up.

History Alive Project (ongoing): Help share Brown's history with the wider congregation by writing stories (or recording interviews) for the bulletin, *Tidings*, website, or wall displays.

Youth Sunday, Feb. 23: Launch of Anniversary Art Installation by youth.

History @ Lunch (3rd Sundays of most months): Theme luncheons to present and discuss a historical topic and its intersection with Brown, including LGBTQ+ inclusion, race and the city (3/15), disability inclusion (4/19), interfaith relations, women's leadership, and global mission.

General Assembly Visitors, June 21: National visitors will be attending the PC(USA) General Assembly and will join us for worship and lunch.

**All-Church Picnic with Campfire, Sept. 26,
@ Bee Tree Preserve in Monkton
(combined with Youth Fall Retreat, Sept. 25-27)**

Doors Open Baltimore, Oct 3: Citywide event to open Baltimore's most interesting spaces to the public. Come help share our historic building with the city.

150th Anniversary Event, Dec. 4: Original sketches, stories, songs from Brown's history, created, produced and presented by Brown (writers, creators, presenters, technicians needed!).

Choral Concert, Dec. 5: With Brown Memorial Choir.

Sanctuary Re-Dedication, Dec. 6: Worship service includes rededicating the Sanctuary to service and worship, followed by reception. ♦



Music Notes

Tiffany Series Concerts

SUNDAY, MARCH 22 AT 3 PM

CATONSVILLE STEEL DRUM BAND

“CHS Steel,” the amazing steel drum band from Catonsville High School, plays the lively and infectious music of Trinidad and Tobago with verve and skill. The group was founded in 1992, and has grown from a four-piece ensemble to a 25-member band. They have studied with famed artists and composers of the steel drum world, and have performed widely. CHS Steel alumni played with YoYo Ma and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under Marin Alsop at the BSO’s 2008-09 Opening Gala.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26 AT 3 PM

“GET A ‘HANDEL’ ON THE ANNIVERSARY:” A CHORAL CONCERT IN HONOR OF BROWN MEMORIAL’S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Brown Memorial’s Chancel Choir and Soloists, conducted by Michael Britt, will perform Handel’s Coronation Anthems #1 and #4: “Zadok the Priest” and “Let Thy Hand Be Strengthened,” as well as excerpts from Messiah. The program will also feature the organ work “Variations on a Theme by Handel” Opus 29 by Arno Landmann, with Britt serving as the organist.

Additionally, the concert will include the premiere of “The Lord Is My Shepherd,” composed by William Copper. The setting of this anthem is based on the window located above the chancel that was installed in 1931. William Copper is a renowned composer and a member of our Chancel Choir.



Silent Film and Organ Concert

FRIDAY, MARCH 6, 7 PM

Enjoy a silent film classic in our sanctuary—the 1926 film “The Flesh and the Devil” starring Greta Garbo and John Gilbert. An original organ score by Michael Britt will accompany the film.

Admission is by suggested donation at the door—\$15 general, \$10 students/seniors and \$25 families. All proceeds benefit Brown Memorial’s Capital Campaign.

Spotlight on Staff

by David Miller



The Trustees, staff and entire church community at Brown Memorial are happy to welcome Keith Moore, Sr., as our new Facilities Manager. Though you might not see him on Sundays, the Facilities Manager has the vital role of making sure all of our facilities are safe, secure and welcoming for our entire church community. In his role as Facilities Manager, Keith will work very closely with the Trustees to manage capital improvement projects and coordinate repairs and maintenance in the newly renovated Fellowship Building, Church House and Brown's historic, 150-year-old sanctuary. After several months without a Facilities Manager, the Trustees are relieved to have an experienced facilities expert on board that is sensitive to our beautiful and historic facilities.

Keith brings a wealth of experience in managing facilities issues and building systems, and is currently the Facilities Manager for Health Care for the Homeless here in Baltimore, where he oversees facilities staff for five facilities. An experienced project manager, Keith has excellent know-how with wood framing, metal fabrication and electrical work. He also holds Maryland state apprentice licenses in heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) contracting and plumbing.

Keith developed his outstanding hands-on skills from an early age while working in his family's construction business, and gained significant experience working on historic structures at the State House complex in Annapolis, Spring Grove Hospital Center and Baltimore City Detention Center for the State of Maryland. Keith is proud to be one of the few lucky folks who have been in the very top of the cupola of the nearly 250-year-old Maryland State House!

Born and raised in Baltimore, Keith's wife Lacey Moore works at NASA, and they have two children, Keith Moore, Jr., age 12, and Kaydence Moore, age 10. They also have two active Jack Russell terriers, Nattie and Rosie, who join them on many beach and camping trips, though trips to the beach are always the family's favorite. When he's not trouble-shooting heating issues or fixing loose electrical outlets, Keith enjoys the outdoors while hunting, fishing, kayaking and off-roading in his 4x4 truck. ♦

El Salvador Spring Delegation May 17-23

The Brown Memorial Ministry of Welcome (BMMW) is happy to announce they are taking a delegation to visit friends at Madre in El Salvador from May 17-23. This is an intentionally shorter trip to accommodate work schedules, allowing more folks to join us.

The main focus will be to meet with the Parish Council at Madre to discern the nature of our partnership going forward. The delegation will also meet with godchildren and their parents to reinforce our commitment to this important program. The delegation will visit our friend, Lydia Leiva in Sesuntepeque, as well visit the holy sites of Divina Providencia where Archbishop Romero was murdered and the University of Central America where the Jesuits and their staff were murdered.

Andrew and Rev. David Norse Thomas of Maryland Presbyterian will lead the delegation with the help of Barbara Cook and in-country guide, Evelyn Portillo. Please prayerfully consider joining the delegation which is sure to give you a new perspective on how and why immigration to the United States happens. The trip is open to adults 18 and over. Estimated in-country costs are \$650, plus air fare.

Contact Barbara Cook
(bawijobe5@gmail.com) or
Ileana Imhoff (iimhoff@park-school.net), BMMW Co-Chairs,
for more information.

Session News & Notes

submitted by Laura Urban, Clerk of Session

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

■ Considered how to organize the congregation for the marking of Brown Memorial's 150th Anniversary in 2020. It is agreed that the anniversary should focus on "process," rather than "product," that is, inviting many others to participate in creating the events and stories that mark the anniversary year. The Annual Meeting will serve as the "launch" of the anniversary, with a message from Andrew Foster Connors to frame the year, followed by breakout sessions for individuals to discuss how to participate around three primary areas: History, Worship, and Events. Elder Gayle Barney is serving as the primary recruiter of volunteers, organizing volunteers who are willing to serve in events and activities.

■ Approved the 2020 budget, which will be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting. The budget estimates income of \$620,000, which is aspirational. We have a \$30,000 gap to the pledge goal of \$525,000 (as of press time for this issue). Elders agreed to continue to inform the congregation with calls and information about the opportunity to increase giving to meet intended work of 2020.

■ Read the 1870 deed restriction from Isabella Brown, requiring that the property "forever remain a Presbyterian Church in doctrine, government, and worship..." Elders considered what it means to have a church built on a gift, and a church that continues to function based on gifts of its members.

■ Approved Brown Memorial joining Baltimore Blue+Green+Just, as requested by Brown's Green Team. This is a new advocacy group,

which will be pushing mayoral candidates to address environmental justice issues in the city. The group was founded by Dick Williams at Memorial Episcopal. Read more at: baltimorebluegreenjust.org.

■ Heard a report from Rev. Michele Ward on the Midtown Youth Collective, which is a tri-church effort (Brown Memorial, Corpus Christi Catholic and Memorial Episcopal) to combine youth programming efforts.

■ Heard a report from Rev. Michele Ward on the Family Listening Campaign in 2019. Eight "listeners" met with 70 percent of families with kids through age 18. She and Rachel Cunningham have developed seven categories of Christian Education goals. ♦



Looking Back and Looking Ahead

At the annual congregational meeting in January, the 2019 annual report was handed out, highlighting all of the church's activities from the past year, as well as a financial summary. Read it at browndowntown.org/newsletters, or pick up a hard copy from the blue Welcome Folders or in the church narthex.

Upcoming Youth Events

MARCH

Middle School Game Night, Friday, March 13, 5:30-8 p.m.

Michele's House (328 East Federal Street, Baltimore, MD 21202).
Pizza and board games!

High School Hang Out, Friday, March 20, 7-9 p.m.

Join Michele and youth leaders for a fun night out! Pizza and pasta night for school students at Joe Squared (33 West North Avenue).
Cost: \$10.

Sunday Night Live, March 22, 5:30-8 p.m.

Dinner and games at Memorial Episcopal from 5:30-6:30 p.m.; scavenger hunt and prayer stations at Corpus Christi, 6:30-8 p.m.

APRIL

Chesapeake Bay Foundation Canoe Trip Saturday, April 18, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday Night Live, April 26, 5:30-8 p.m.

Duckpin bowling at Stoneleigh Lanes, \$10 per person. Pick up and drop off at Stoneleigh Lanes.

SAVE THE DATES

Spring Backpacking Trip. Friday-Sunday, May 15-17

Join Michele and youth leaders for a weekend of exploring the Appalachian Trail at Rocky Knob Quarry Gap outside of Gettysburg, PA. This trip is open to rising 9th grade to graduating 12th grade students. Cost: \$50.

Fall Youth Retreat, Friday-Sunday, September 25-27

BeeTree Preserve, Monkton, MD, 6 p.m. drop off at BeeTree on Friday and noon pick up at Brown Memorial on Sunday. Cost: \$50.

All Church Picnic

Saturday, September 26

BeeTree Preserve, Monkton, MD, 3-8 p.m. Games, community potluck/picnic, music around the campfire and s'mores. Bring a dish to share.



Youth during the Winter Weekend at Massanetta in January.



Lenten Activities & Worship Services

Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6:30 pm

Gather in the Assembly Room for pancakes, games for all ages and the 4rd Annual Brown Memorial vs. Memorial Episcopal pancake relay race. The record is Brown 2, Memorial 1. RSVP to Rachel Cunningham, rachel@browndowntown.org, by Feb. 23. Come at 5:30 to help cook.

Ash Wednesday Tri-Church Service of Worship

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 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 Brown Memorial.

Faith Topics for Lent: Saying NO to the Culture of NOW **Sundays, 9:45 am, Room 201 Fellowship Building**

Join Andrew Foster Connors and others to look at our 24/7 society of consumption, a society in which we live to achieve, accomplish, perform and possess, using Walter Brueggemann's book *Sabbath as Resistance* as a framework. Books are

recommended but not required for the class and are available at local retailers or through Amazon.com.

Committees on the Move **March 1 & April 5, 1 pm**

During Lent, we're experimenting with a collective meeting day and time for all committees. Grab lunch at the potluck and head to your meeting or stay and visit with those not attending a meeting. Meeting locations will be announced in weekly communications.

Tri-Church Education Series **March 11, 25, April 1, 6:30 pm** **Memorial Episcopal**

Who goes to heaven? Is there a hell? What about other religions? How many gods are there? Join us for a three week ecumenical exploration of salvation. Dinner provided. This year's Tri-Church series takes place at Memorial Episcopal.

Sunday Night Live **March 22, 5:30-8 pm** **Memorial Episcopal & Corpus Christi**

What does passion have to do with Jesus? Our monthly gathering for middle and high school youth will feature prayer stations focused on what passion has to do with Jesus, Lent and our lives. Join us for dinner at Memorial Episcopal followed

by games and social justice-themed prayer stations at Corpus Christi.
Weekly Prayer Opportunities
Prayer Service, Thursdays,
March 5-April 9, 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.

Weekly Ecumenical Worship Services & Lunch **Wednesdays, Feb. 26-April 8** **Noon at Brown Memorial**

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. This year, Brown Memorial is hosting these services and the lunch that follows. Contact Julie Hanks at jmhanks@verizon.net, or 410-598-0888, to help with the lunch by either providing food or volunteering the day of.



Holy Week Activities & Worship Services

Palm Sunday Branches & Brunch Sunday, April 5

We gather with Corpus Christi Catholic and Memorial Episcopal churches for an annual neighborhood Palm Procession. Meet at the fountain on Park Avenue just north of McMechen Street at 9:45 a.m. Our traditional education hour will not take place this Sunday. Following the 11 a.m. service of worship enjoy brunch (bring your favorite dish to share) in the Assembly Room.

Maunday Thursday Soup Supper & Contemplative Worship

April 9, 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. So that we

may have an accurate headcount, RSVP to Rachel by April 8.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service Friday, April 10, 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.) Childcare for infants and toddlers is available upon request for this service.

Easter Decorating Saturday, April 11 10 am – Noon

Come decorate the sanctuary with us in preparation for Easter and help turn our "sacred space" into a spring garden.

Easter Sunrise Service Sunday, April 12, 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. Gather for songs, liturgy, prayers and good news. Breakfast at Light Street Presbyterian Church follows.

Easter Sunday, April 12, 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.**

REFLECTIONS ON THE Family Listening Campaign



A group interview with Rev. Michele Ward, Kelly Knock and Darrell Glaser, George and Emily Brown, Grace Peng and Mehran Armand. Their children range in ages from preschool to high school, and they all found their way to Brown and Baltimore for a variety of reasons. Learn more about these families and what motivates them in their faith, in the city and in the world.

MW: Why does spiritual formation matter to you and your family?

DG & KK: Spiritual formation can be both a private and social experience. We believe the social experience of action and interacting with others provides a forum to experience God. If we provide an accepting environment for our children to experiment with their thoughts and humble connections with their own spirituality, we believe those connections will serve them throughout their life. They will provide a well for our children to consistently return to for hope and courage. The church provides a social format for these experiences. Spiritual formation as a private experience is something they will come to know independently. As parents we cannot tell them how to think about their formation or how to connect with it privately. For myself, I [Kelly] have

had many cycles of finding grace and feeling lost. It's so tricky as a parent to prepare yourself for seeing your children go through that, but also tricky to prepare the child for it. If they find ways to have solo, independent, quiet moments with themselves our hope is that they will grow their spiritual foundation to turn to God when they need to. All of this to say spiritual formation is very important to us. I'm grateful for this exercise as I don't know that I would have thought about it this deeply or articulated how important it was for our family otherwise...so thank you!

GP & MA: Spiritual formation is a personal journey, yet it is highly influenced by those around us, especially our family. Our spirituality centers us in the world and supports our purpose in life. Spiritual energy gives us meaning in life. Businesses talk about reenergiz-

ing the workforce through energy management rather than time management (Schwartz and McCarthy, 2007)—time is finite, while energy is infinite. We do agree that it is important to balance our spiritual energy with our physical, emotional and intellectual energies to bring our full selves into our lives. Brown provides a wellspring of spiritual energy for us.

GB & EB: Spiritual formation is one of our connectors. George and I [Emily] both stood up for our beliefs and our friends who were not being accepted by the status quo of the time at young ages. The moral development we have experienced over the years is what makes us each proud to be who we are and provides us methods for respecting one another as unique individuals. We see spirituality as an innate aspect of humanity that requires development. If we choose not to exercise

that privilege, the negative aspects of ourselves can unknowingly be what grows and strengthens. We want to pass as much of our positive selves onto our children and our community at large. We want to see the good parts of ourselves ignite sparks in our children at a young age so that they can fill in where we leave off. Just like a succession plan, we want our children to continue with our legacy of leading morally significant lives and we want them to do it bigger and better than we have. Being kind and loving and unselfish during our weakest moments of exhaustion, misunderstanding or disagreement is some of the best role modeling we can do for one another—it makes our lives together easier. If we can do that around the people whom we allow to frustrate us most perhaps they will send some of that same energy outward. In our children's case, we hope the long term effects of being moral protects them well into the future.

MW: What brings your family to Brown?

DG & KK: As a mother, I [Kelly] draw on my own childhood experiences and think about which ones I would like to share with my children. My formative years were spent in a (relatively) progressive Presbyterian church in the deep south in Pensacola, Florida. As I have navigated the world over the years, I now know my childhood experience at the church gave me a solid foundation. I want to pass that

on to my children and have chosen Brown as a place to foster their own spiritual formation. My husband [Darrell] grew up in the Midwest in a strict but loving Lutheran church. His family eventually left and his brother became an openly gay Episcopal priest in an interracial marriage. I [Kelly] don't want to speak for Darrell, but he's seen his own family evolve spiritually. As we navigate parenting together we have had many discussions ensuring we are providing a loving and accepting spiritual environment for our own children the way his parents were able to with him and his brother... and their other three brothers (five boys total!).

GP & MA: Grace first came to Brown in 1996 when she moved to Baltimore from Chicago. One of her pastors at the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago recommended Brown. After Mehran moved to Baltimore we decided to get married at Brown. Rev. Roger Gench and Rev. Jim Shuman were instrumental in preparing us for the big day that combined Christian, Chinese and Iranian traditions. We joined the church after we got married in 1998 and have remained here ever since. The passion of members of the church for global mission (Carl and Mary Taylor) and their work around the world touched us and motivated us to keep coming back to Brown, even after we moved to Howard County in 2002. The worship, sermons, music and programs at Brown continue to be so special

for us over all these years. Grace served as a deacon from 2000-2006 and Elder from 2010-2016 and led the Global Mission Committee during her time as an Elder. Yari was born in 2003 and Karoon was born in 2006. Global Mission brought our family to the Baltimore Dakota Learning Camps. We started going as a family to the Pejuhutazizi Community in Upper Sioux, Minnesota when the family camp started in 2012. Through Brown our whole family has formed special bonds and friendships with our Native American brothers and sisters that continues to this day.

GB & EB: Religion in action.

Brown connects us to the city and the spirit of radical philanthropy on which it was founded. Brown offers a religious home of meaning—relationships, participatory activities, organizations, music, art, story telling—that provides a multi-faceted exploration of our faith. One where we all have the ability to grow alongside others based on where we each are in our spiritual/religious journey. We believe that faith, like politics, can be something ingrained in every decision we make. At the onset of our family relationship, George and I [Emily] hiked the Gunpowder after he attended church but I did not. He shared with me what he remembered about the sermon—the war on wants through commercials. Having turned my career away from advertising for this very reason, the discussion hit home. The Brown sermon encouraged us to eliminate

continued on page 12 ➞

Listening Campaign

Continued from Page 11

commercials from our TV viewing which has kept us wanting of and competing for much less materialism. Changing our subconscious diet provides us room to invest our thoughts and energies elsewhere. Brown reminds us how connected we are to the world as a whole, and how much power we as individuals have to create change. Brown offers external actualization of the good that we do and is a reminder when we do not respond to life the way we should. Brown reminds each one of us that there is a God, a method to being good, and that we live in a world and a community that matter.

MW: What do you want to see change in this city?

DG & KK: I [Kelly] switched professions a couple of years ago and now work in real estate. I work in neighborhoods all over the city. I have been up close and personal with the city's blight and it has been very hard to process. As an answer to your question...I would love to see neighborhoods flourish! I've also been able to witness communities

coming together to make growth happen. Seeing people pull together and believe and take action is truly awe inspiring! Brown is a major component for seeing these communities flourish.

GP & MA: We would like to explore new ways to increase social bonds and partnerships and moving towards a framework for reducing extreme income gaps within the city and in the world.

GB & EB: Our response to this question has changed over the years—it used to be to see fewer boarded up homes. Now it is to have a safer environment. Essentially, it has evolved as we journey through our own Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. George wants to see everyone have jobs and a low murder rate. I [Emily] want to see people who demand respect for others just as they demand it for themselves. We both believe change happens through education. Not just for the least among us, but greater education for us all: spiritual education, academic education, emotional education, historic

education.

For George's family, Baltimore is a city that rewards hard work and loyalty. For mine, it has rewarded creativity and metamorphosis. We want to see the city support dedicated, transformative leadership. We want to see the systems that are flawed take responsibility for the errors of their ways and work their way out of them. We'd like to see people who think on their own and aren't stymied by the media or past beliefs become leaders. We'd like to see the city respond into a self aware Mecca of creative, morality based problem solvers who can take the historically-accurate-positive from existing situations and make it grow into something bigger.

MW: How does participating at Brown bring you closer to that hope for change?

DG & KK: One of the many reasons we chose Brown was for the grace in action that they truly live by. If we are inspired by Brown's work, we will in turn continue to do what we can to contribute. All of a city's challenges and opportunities are so intertwined it's up to each of us to take steps together and inspire each other.

GP & MA: No matter how crazy our lives, we can count on Brown to keep us grounded to what is truly important in life and this world. Brown continually instills in us the power of spiritual, social and environmental justice, and the impor-



tance of change and reformation to build a strong foundation for hope.

GB & EB: Brown inspires us.

The leadership at Brown creates a community that is willing to work hard in whatever capacity they have to offer. Our group has a desire to change how things are done, to question existing belief systems, to look at historical constructs and to look outside of our state and our country to examine systems that successfully work toward positive change. Uncomfortable, growth-like scenarios of honest discussion are encouraged at Brown. Our leaders are not the type to complain and leave it at that. They are humble, willing to evolve and they know the importance of diversity in that equation.

The size of our youthful congregation as we have seen through Tammy and Tida's childcare, Families of Faith, and Sunday School is growing not only by size but by intellectual power. Brown has introduced us to non-Brown and Brown-sponsored volunteer opportunities that match our interests.

The Church has motivated us to participate in things we would be too fearful to participate in on our own. Brown has made us realize that our kids need to learn a fundamental level of spiritual development now. Brown creates tools for us to use, but we need to be present in order to be aware. At a recent BUILD rally off of North Avenue to support the Kirwan Commission, our kids' after school activities (aka our impasse for attending) were cancelled and together we were able to go. Just like Sunday

School is at times, they did not want to go, but we offered no other options. We all interacted with people whose distinguishable similarity to us was an appreciation for education. We cannot provide opportunities like that on our own. When it was time to go, just like Sunday School often is, they did not want to leave.

MW: How does participating in the life of the church bring you and your family closer to God and to one another?

DG & KK: As neither of us are from Baltimore, and don't have much family nearby we realize the important role Brown plays in our life to help close that gap. Some days it feels like just the two of us against the world trying to juggle all the balls of both parents working and looking after two young children. We often are so fried we can't even crawl a few blocks to church! But we've found that the people at Brown still accept us and let us come back! This is crucial for us as we depend on the church to extend the positive social networks to our kids that we are lacking without family close by. The experience of witnessing others being positive and honesty at church brings us all closer to God. Going to church gives our family permission to talk about God at home in a nonforceful way. Sometimes we manage to eek out a blessing before dinner in the midst of toddler chaos. Sometimes we have a prayer before bed when they aren't fighting going to bed, or they will randomly talk about God unsolicited. And best of all, sometimes my

kids will say on a Thursday....I want to go to church today!


GP & MA: Even though our family members have different ways of experiencing God, our trips to Brown (half an hour each way) gives us protected time to spend with each other and time to debate about God. The Rev. Emily Proctor taught us to look for God moments in our lives. It is so special when we experience these, especially as a family.

GB & EB: It allows us all a common goal to center ourselves around, understanding the Bible and its surrounding history and that provides us opportunities to live God's word. Brown makes us self aware and cognizant of the world around us. Together we journey in the same place to determine how to fit into it all. We have often been intimidated by the level of intelligence and accomplishment the members of Brown have achieved. But we also understand the importance of our varying roles and how precious it is we all are able to interact with one another and that everyone has something special to bring to the table. We are a family of doers, which means we sometimes move too fast and without reflection. Brown encourages us to prioritize, slow down and to exist at a level more vulnerable and oftentimes more visceral than we allow ourselves to be in other settings. Sometimes we miss a Sunday, but as the BUILD rally reminded us, God always gives us opportunities to build upon those parts of ourselves that we need to grow. ♦



March Birthdays

03/03	Brad Norris
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
03/18	Sophie Scheps
03/19	Sarah Diehl
03/19	Martha Fitzpatrick Bishai
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
03/27	Olivia Liang
03/29	Erin Anderson
03/29	Olivia Babb
03/29	David Lascu

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

Brown Tutoring Program



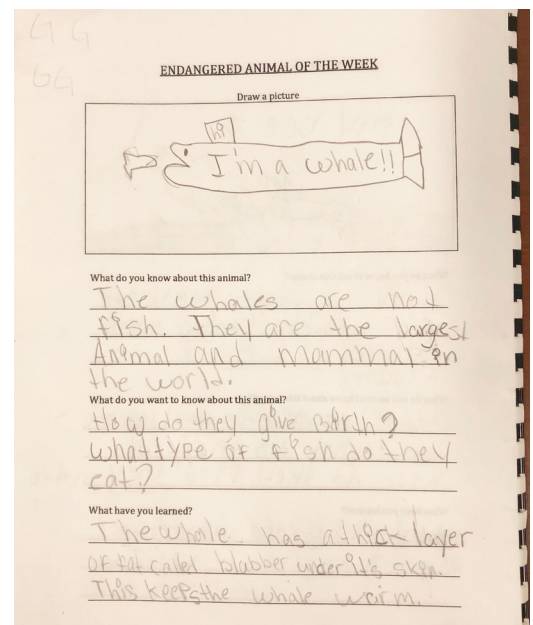
Explorers At Work

by Amy Munds, Tutoring Program Assistant Director

"What goes on inside a beehive?" "How many babies does an elephant have at one time?" "Why are polar bears endangered?" These are just a few of the many curious questions our students at Brown Memorial Tutoring are asking about endangered animals.

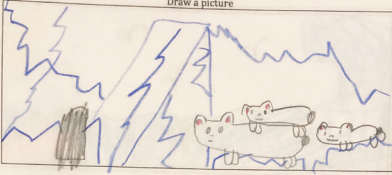
Each year we focus on a specific theme directed toward inspiring reading and writing in our young scholars. With the guidance of their tutors, these students, equipped with an explorer's journal, pencil and resource library, set off to explore the world of these endangered animals, searching for answers to better understand these slowly vanishing creatures. Not only are our young explorers discovering the beauty and value of these animals, but are also discovering ways in which we all can ensure their longevity.

Elias D., 3rd grader at Mt. Royal, expresses it eloquently in his writing, "I don't particularly like bees but now that I know how important they are for our world, I think I can find something I like about them." ♦



ENDANGERED ANIMAL OF THE WEEK

Draw a picture



What do you know about this animal?

They live in the north pole.
they have two layers
of fur.

What do you want to know about this animal?

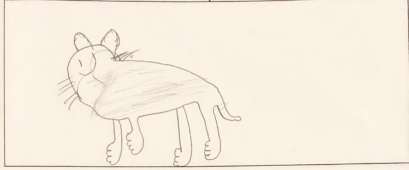
when are polar bear
babies born.

What have you learned?

polar bear cubs are born
in pairs.

ENDANGERED ANIMAL OF THE WEEK

Draw a picture



What do you know about this animal?

They live in the wild And in
the Zoo.

What do you want to know about this animal?

What kind of food they eat?

What have you learned?

At the start of the 20th cent
there were about 100,000 tiger
world. Now there are only about
left.



April Birthdays

04/02	Jack Hodges
04/03	Drew Johnston
04/03	Ruskin Nohe-Moren
04/05	Andy Johnston
04/06	Elizabeth Bobango
04/06	Hannah Bobango
04/06	Elizabeth Nash
04/06	James 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
04/11	Sarah Egan
04/11	Will Egan
04/11	Lucille McCarthy
04/11	Jeanne Thomas
04/12	Ernest Imhoff
04/12	Grace Todd
04/13	James Cavallon
04/13	Annalisa Jenkins
04/15	Annika Brockman
04/15	Karoon Armand
04/16	Brittany Soeun
04/17	Kathy Graning
04/18	Dever Cunningham
04/19	Barbara Cates
04/19	Annie Schindler
04/20	Mary Mashburn
04/21	Caleb Soeun
04/22	Greta Finney
04/22	Alex Hagen
04/24	Gareth Reiman
04/25	Red Finney
04/25	Clementine Hensley
04/26	Chloe Cheseldine
04/27	Andrew Foster Connors
04/29	Freddie Courpas
04/29	Jean Savina
04/30	Katie Egan

Five Ways to Use CCB

CCB—or Creating Connections at Brown—is the name we use for Brown Memorial’s internal church website. The password-protected, cloud-based program is both a database for church staff and a way for church members and groups to communicate. If you are a church member or active friend and you haven’t visited CCB yet, we encourage you to login and take a look around.

Login. If we have your contact information, then you have a profile in CCB. To login for the first time, locate the green “CCB Login” button at the bottom of the church website homepage. From the CCB login page, click on “Request Account” to be emailed automatic login credentials after filling out your information.

Update your profile. After logging in, click on your name in the upper right corner to visit your personal profile page. Then click on the blue “Edit Profile” button to update your contact information for yourself or your family members.

View your giving history. Click on the “Give” tab in the left menu bar to view your past pledges and print giving statements.

Search for committees and groups. Click on the “Groups” tab in the left menu bar and either type the name of a committee/group in the search bar or click on the magnifying glass to search all committees/groups at Brown.

Look up a friend. Do you want to get in touch with someone you met at church on a recent Sunday? Click on the “People” tab in the left menu bar and type their name in the search field. If you only remember their first name, a list of all people in the church with that name will pop up. ♦



BMPA Calendar

*Alive in the City
and the World*

SUNDAYS:

Mediation Circle 9:45 am • Education Hour 9:45 am • Worship 11 am

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.

Feb. 25, Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper, 6:30 p.m. Assembly Room. *Details on page 8.*

Wednesdays Feb. 26-Apr. 8, Ecumenical Worship Services, 12 p.m. Brown Memorial. *Details on page 8.*

Feb. 26, Ash Wednesday Tri-Church Service of Worship, 7:30 p.m. Corpus Christi Church. *Details on page 8.*

Mar. 1, Community Potluck, 12:15 p.m. Assembly Room. Bring a dish to share for lunch.

Mar. 5 & Apr. 2, Queerly Beloved Small Group, 7 p.m. Michele Ward's home. Enjoy a potluck dinner, Bible study and stories. Main dish provided. Open to LGBTQ+ community.

Mar. 5 & Apr. 19, Families of Faith, 4:30-7 p.m. Assembly Room. A dinner for parents and children. Parents explore questions children ask about God, the Bible, and faith and

nursery staff engage the children in activities.

Mar. 6, Silent Film & Organ Concert, 7 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 11, 25, Apr. 1, Tri-Church Education Series, 6:30 p.m. Memorial Episcopal. *Details page 8.*

Mar. 15 & Apr. 19, History @ Lunch, 12:15 p.m. Assembly Room. *Details on page 3.*

Mar. 17 & Apr. 21, Theology on Tap, 7:30 p.m. Blue Pitt Barbeque. Contact Chip, cmorganriegel@gmail.com to confirm date and topic.

Mar. 19 & April 16, 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 about location and to confirm dates.

Mar. 6, Literature & Faith Group, 7 p.m. Read and discuss short narratives and poetic selections with religious themes. No reading assignments. Contact Elden for more information, bonnieeldens@verizon.net.

Mar. 22 & Apr. 14, Male Spirituality Small Group, 12:15 p.m. (Mar. 22) and 7 p.m. (Apr. 14). Fellowship Building, Rm. 201. A monthly gathering currently exploring Richard Rohr's book *The Universal Christ*.

Mar. 22, Tiffany Series: Catonsville Steel Drum Band, 3 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

Mar. 28 & Apr. 25, Contemplative Hiking, 9:30 a.m. Gunpowder State Falls Park. Details at browndowntown.org/calendar.

Apr. 26, Tiffany Series: Handel Choral Concert, 3 p.m. Sanctuary. *Details on page 4.*

HOLY WEEK & EASTER SERVICES
Details on page 9.

YOUTH GROUP ACTIVITIES
Details on page 7.

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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