



**BROWN
MEMORIAL
PARK AVENUE**

WINTER 2025

TIDINGS

Good News from Brown Memorial Park Avenue

UPCOMING EVENTS

*See page 13 for 2025
Lent Activities &
Worship Services.*

For links to join hybrid events virtually, please visit the church calendar at www.browndowntown.org.



While Brown's values remain consistent, regardless of whether the surrounding environment is favorable, this edition of Tidings aims to present a new framework and resource for Brown members as we direct our energies toward the love, liberation, justice, and inclusion Jesus calls us to pursue.



ANDREW'S MESSAGE

Eitan Hersh, a political scientist at Tufts, argued several years ago that in America, we've lost our understanding of what healthy politics looks like. At the time, he said our rage over what's wrong wasn't helping. *"A third of Americans say they spend two hours or more each day on politics,"* he wrote. *"Of these people, four out of five say that not one minute of that time is spent on any kind of real political work. It's all TV news and podcasts and radio shows and social media and cheering and booing and complaining to friends and family."* Real political work, as Ezra Klein has said so well, *"is action in service of change, not information in service of outrage."*

I keep coming back to Hersh's comments over the years because, with an abundance of outrage and convenient online outlets to vent it, it's easy for me to lose focus on the "real political work" we are called to pursue together as Christians. By "real political work," I do not mean the partisan stuff with which we associate most politics. Rather, the etymological meaning of politics: of the city and its people — the public work of making our community more like the beloved community Jesus preached in his day as "the kingdom of God."

Continued on page 2 >

The church is built for just this kind of political work. One of the “Great Ends (i.e. Purposes) of the Church,” according to our Presbyterian Book of Order, is “the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.” We are to serve as a kind of microcosm of what God’s dream for the larger community looks like when God’s values drive our actions. You should be able to peer into our life together and see the loving kindness that drives us, along with the joy that comes from centering God’s joy and justice in our shared journey. The divisions that mark our world should be lessened by the gospel truth at the heart of our living together. And when we fail to live up to that vision (as will often be the case), the hard practice of forgiveness should be showing the world just what is needed for any deep communal renewal.

Participation in the church, then, becomes something much more than (or perhaps much different from) personal, spiritual improvement isolated from the world. It becomes an incubator for learning how to contribute toward God’s mission of reconciliation in the world. More personally, it becomes the place where I learn how to grow as a person among other people who are just as loved and cherished and prone to sin as I am, who are also struggling to discover or hone their place in God’s movement to repair the world.

To that end, as a staff, we’ve been exploring the ideas and resources presented here since last fall with an eye toward what would be required of us in the near future to make our community more like the beloved community Jesus preached about. You’ll find more about the vision for this edition of *Tidings* in the next section, but I hope that what is shared here helps further equip us to move from anxiety into action as we all discover and hone our place in God’s movement to repair the world.



THE VISION FOR THIS *TIDINGS*

Brown Memorial Park Avenue Presbyterian Church was founded in 1869. Our church community is older than 13 U.S. states. Out of the 47 presidential administrations that have taken place since the founding of the U.S., only 18 occurred before Brown existed, which means we've witnessed 29 come and go. Almost all the disruptive events and destabilizing upheavals we've faced in the 21st century are not new to Brown. Pandemics, wars, significant social and political movements—both progressive and regressive—world-changing technological advancements, economic highs and lows: Brown has experienced it all before. **Perhaps the saying, “This isn’t our first rodeo,” should serve as Brown’s motto.**

The point here is that merely stating that Brown Memorial is 156 years old doesn’t fully convey the reality of our community’s experiences. There is depth, a long-standing and very intentional commitment, and a deep-rootedness at Brown that can guide us

through yet another moment of instability and change. As Andrew referenced in his opening message, our church has all the right ingredients to be an “incubator for learning how to contribute toward God’s mission of reconciliation in the world.”

While Brown’s values remain consistent, regardless of whether the surrounding environment is favorable, this edition of *Tidings* aims to present a new framework and resource for Brown members.

It will introduce the Social Change Ecosystem Map by Deepa Iyer, a writer, facilitator, and activist. The map will help us identify our unique role within a social change ecosystem, align those roles with the roles of others, and, while firmly grounded on our community’s foundation of experience, direct our energies toward the love, liberation, justice, and inclusion that Jesus calls us to pursue.

What’s your role as we get catalyzed for action?

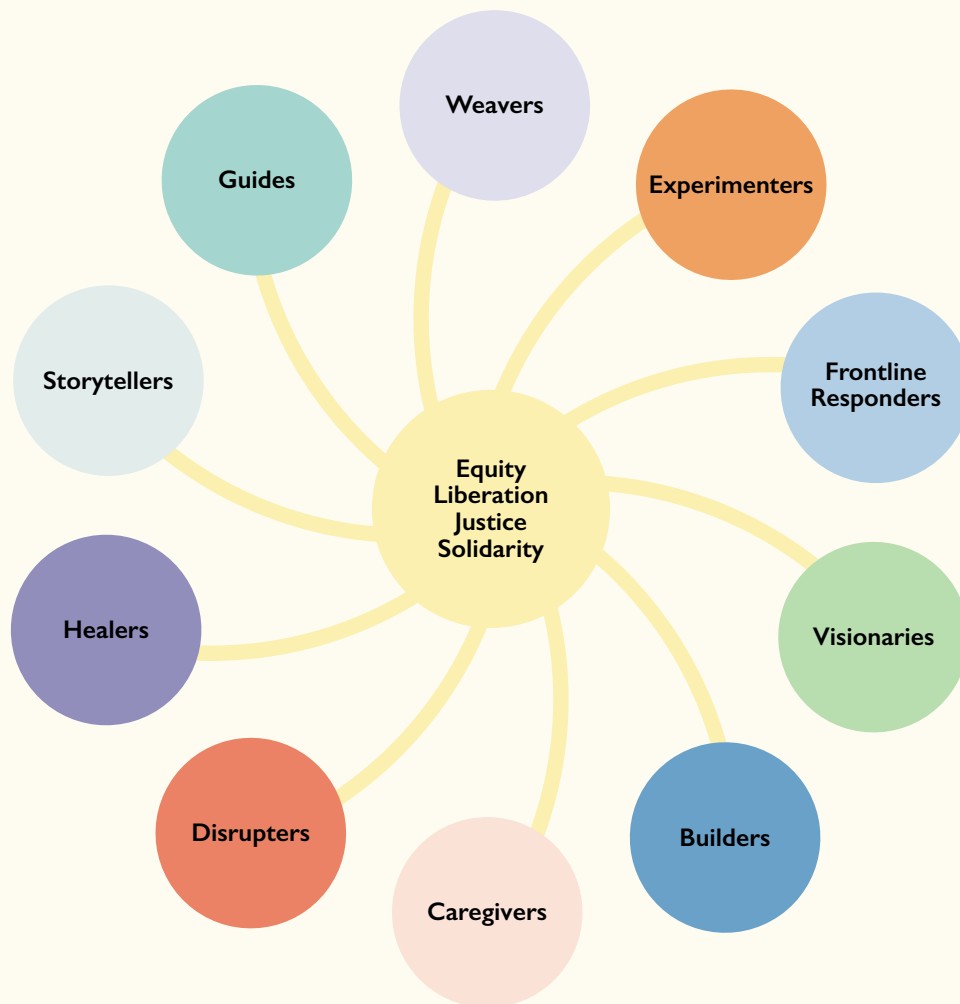


THE MAP AND FRAMEWORK: DETAILS FOR USE

In the following pages, you'll find a visual representation of the Social Change Ecosystem Map and guidance on using the map and identifying your role. This guidance is a condensed version of what Deepa Iyer presents in her workbook, *Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection and Connection*, as well as on her website and blog. (Links to all the resources mentioned in this edition of Tidings can be found on the back cover.)

Regardless of your current level of involvement in social change efforts, Deepa Iyer's framework helps you understand your role and assess your contributions. Newcomers to social change will discover starting points to enhance their skills and engage with a sense of purpose. Experienced individuals can utilize the guide to reset their perspective. Collectively, the Brown community can employ this guide to identify the social change roles we're lacking, optimize collaboration among the different roles already represented in the church, and find ways to strengthen our ecosystem further.

THE SOCIAL CHANGE ECOSYSTEM MAP



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THE MAP

The map has three parts: values, roles, and ecosystem. The circle in the center is used to identify shared values. In the example, the values are equity, liberation, justice, and solidarity. At Brown, we might define them according to the values Jesus embodies and we aspire to as Christians. Around the center are the ten roles typically seen in any social change ecosystem, and the entire map represents the ecosystem in which we're operating.

lyer's workbook contains detailed sections about using the map, including deep dives into evaluating ecosystems and establishing shared values. However, here are examples of a few questions she recommends for individuals or organizations to help provide insight. **Hopefully, these questions get you thinking as you review the map and learn more about the roles:**

Individuals

- What role(s) am I best suited to play, given my skills, innate strengths, lived experiences, knowledge, and interests?
- How do I sustain my contributions to social change for lasting impact?
- What do I need from my ecosystem?

Organizations

- What roles do our staff members play?
- What are our organization's assets? What are the gaps?
- How do we move from silos to solidarity?

After their introduction to it, the Ministry Staff also brainstormed questions that could be useful in providing us insights as we learn about the Social Change Ecosystem. The following might be helpful framing for you:

Individuals

- What are the assumptions I bring to the ecosystem about what it will do for me?
- When an expectation isn't met, do I question how reasonable the expectation was?

Organizations

- Are there particular roles in our ecosystem that are not as appreciated? Are we, therefore, rejecting the value of that role?
- What roles are we missing in our ecosystem?



THE ROLES

The meat of this *Tidings* edition is meant to help you explore each of the ten Social Change Ecosystem roles and find the one(s) that you most identify with or the ones you aspire to embrace in your work at Brown or with other groups or organizations you're a part of. **Here are some things to keep in mind, per Iyer, as you learn about the roles:**

- your innate gifts
- your lived experiences
- your learned skills
- your formal and informal knowledge
- competencies you may need to develop for a particular role (storyteller; healer)
- natural fits based on your personality or lived experience (caregiver; guide)
- more than one role might be right for you, but you don't have to play every role
- your role can shift and change based on the situation
- all roles are necessary, how does your role can complement and amplify others' roles

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROLES

Below are descriptions of each of the roles. The workbook includes much more detailed sections outlining the roles, sharing example stories, and providing capacity strengthening tips, but in addition to descriptions, you'll also find examples of a few statements Iyer uses to help you figure out the proper role for you.



Weavers:

I see the through-lines of connectivity between people, places, organizations, ideas, and movements.

- I notice points of intersection and connection between seemingly disparate and distinct ideas, systems, geographies, or communities.
- I can hold space through facilitation, mediation, and visioning.
- I'm often told that I am a networker; connecting people to each other.



Experimenters:

I innovate, pioneer, and invent. I take risks and course-correct as needed.

- I come up with out-of-the-box, innovative, and creative ideas and approaches to advance a vision.
- I believe a fresh perspective on an issue can make a meaningful difference.
- People often describe me as innovative, creative, and strategic.



Frontline Responders:

I address community crises by marshaling and organizing resources, networks, and messages.

- I can think quickly and clearly when a crisis emerges.
- I know whom to reach out to for support in a crisis.
- People often say I'm reliable and ready.



Visionaries:

I imagine and generate our boldest possibilities, hopes and dreams, and remind us of our direction.

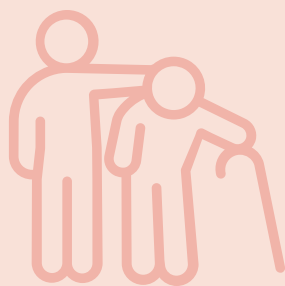
- I believe it's possible to have a future that is better than what we have now.
- People often say that I'm inspiring and bold.
- When people feel unclear or uncertain, I'm able to remind them of where we're heading.



Builders:

I develop, organize, and implement ideas, practices, people, and resources in service of a collective vision.

- I can take a big vision or idea and make it happen in real life.
- I enjoy time-lining, tasking, and delegating.
- I feel supported when someone else can provide the big picture of where we are heading.



Caregivers:

- I nurture and nourish the people around me by creating and sustaining a community of care, joy, and connection.
- I have an instinct for knowing what other people around me might need.
- People often tell me that they appreciate my thoughtfulness.
- I don't need credit, publicity, or visibility. I'm satisfied with a direct "thank you" from individuals.



Disruptors:

I take uncomfortable and risky actions to shake up the status quo, to raise awareness, and to build power.

- I am ready, willing, and prepared to take risks, publicly and privately, to advocate for and express my convictions.
- I believe in shaking up the status quo of unjust systems, institutions, and ideas.
- People often tell me that I am strong and brave for being willing to put my beliefs into action.



Healers:

I recognize and tend to the generational and current traumas caused by oppressive systems, institutions, policies, and practices.

- I believe we can repair and rebuild society through a process of individual and collective healing and transformation.
- I utilize a variety of modalities to provide healing and care.
- People often describe me as having a calming and peaceful energy.



Storytellers:

I craft and share our community stories, cultures, experiences, histories, and possibilities through art, music, media, and movement.

- My skills involve expressing social change values and causes through artistic mediums.
- I believe that we must preserve and share community histories and perspectives, especially those that are often suppressed or erased.
- People often describe me as having creative and generative talent and energy.



Guides:

I teach, counsel, and advise, using my gifts of well-earned discernment and wisdom.

- I believe that I have a responsibility to mentor and support others to fulfill their roles in service to social change.
- I have gained wisdom and skills through my experiences in various social change efforts and ecosystems.
- In moments of crisis, I am prepared to suggest what I have learned in order to assist those on the frontlines.

THE ROLES IN ACTION: TESTIMONIES FROM BROWN MEMBERS

Now that you've learned more about the Social Change Ecosystem Map and better understand each of the roles, we thought sharing testimonies from a few Brown members on the roles they identify with and how they've expressed those roles within our church community would be helpful. **This is what the roles in action look like on a practical level!**



**Elizabeth Reichelt,
BUILD**

I identify most strongly as a builder and caregiver in Deepa Iyer's Social Change Ecosystem Map. I am a builder because I particularly enjoy working with others to create effective teams to achieve specific goals. This comes through in my work with BUILD, where I serve on the citywide housing team with other BUILD leaders from across this city and the Center West Baltimore organizing team, where leaders from Brown Memorial are working with leaders from Macedonia Baptist and the surrounding area to develop enough civic power to bring tangible improvements in the neighborhood. A hyper-local example of that is my work with my neighbors to get an ADA accessible sidewalk. My role as a caregiver is evident in the notes that I enjoy writing to people when I see them on our prayer list or the calls checking in on folks who I haven't seen in a while. It also comes through in my enjoyment of planning celebrations, such as Andrew's 20th anniversary of ministry. Amid the chaos that the new president is creating, doubling down on my work as a builder and a caregiver grounds me and keeps me focused on what I value the most — being part of a strong, healthy community.

I identify with the "Weaver" role because of its emphasis on "through-lines of connectivity." In the Cuba Partnership at Brown, we use online messaging apps to maintain a line of connectivity with our partner church, Iglesia Presbiteriana en Camajuaní. This allows me to participate in their daily activities, from birthday wishes to prayers for healing. Additionally, being active in Brown's partnership has allowed me to discover new lines of connectivity with other organizations with Cuban church partnerships. Some, like Marion Presbyterian in Kansas, partner with other churches within the El Centro Presbytery of Cuba. Others have partnerships directly with Camajuaní. Meeting these other US partners has given me examples of new ways to interact with our partners and provides us with a larger community to face challenges. For example, Brown is currently working with El Redentor Presbyterian Church in Oviedo, Florida, to purchase a generator for the church community of Camajuaní, who continue to face ongoing power blackouts. By partnering with El Redentor, we've raised the needed funds for this effort much more quickly and with less expense than if either of our communities had attempted it alone!



**Morgana Kinlan,
Cuba Partnership**



**Rachel Cunningham,
Congregational
Life Minister**

“ I remember telling someone years ago that I could never be that person who protests on the street corner, that just wasn't me. Over the years, that's sometimes left me wondering just how I fit into Brown's social justice mission. Was I letting others do the difficult work for me? Learning about Deepa Iyer's Social Change Map was quite enlightening. For the first time, I could see how I fit into a framework with others, and how it takes all types of individuals to make it work. I did not have to be a street corner protester to do my part in making the world a better place. As a "Caregiver" I support others along the way by listening and offering encouragement, providing spiritual companionship, and offering prayers in addition to tangible acts. In my new role as the Congregational Life Minister, I also want to lean into the role of "Weaver" to help others make meaningful connections so that they can live into the roles they are being called to.

“ As I thought about Deepa Iyer's social change ecosystem, I saw myself in several of these different roles, guided by my love for this community and my caring and shared faith with others. I see myself as a "Caregiver" in my role as a Deacon as I am helping fellow members, offering care and support in times of need, and reaching out to members as they seek connection, listening, praying, and offering a helping hand or friendly hug. I also see my role as that of a "Weaver", whether that is helping to organize Sunday lunches, serving as Liturgist for a particular service, or meeting with the Deacons to address the needs of the congregation. All these roles connect me to the pastoral leadership of Brown as well as many of my fellow parishioners. Finally, I see myself as a "Storyteller", sharing the words of the Sunday lesson or singing the powerful faith messages in the Anthems, sung by the choir. This inspires me and enriches my faith.



**Ed Hambleton,
Deacons**

WHERE DOES MY ROLE FIT AT BROWN?

Now that you're narrowing in on which Social Change Ecosystem role suits you best, you may be wondering how to connect with the incredible ecosystem we already have well-established at Brown, as discussed in the introduction, to contribute to the positive social change efforts currently underway. Here, you'll find a list of all the opportunities at Brown. If you spot a group you'd like to join, reach out to the group contacts, share the role you've identified, and inquire about how you can utilize your talents to collaborate and enhance the ongoing work. **Engaging and sharing your strengths is both an act of community care and self-care!**

If you aren't sure which group would be right for you, reach out to Rachel for a chat. As Congregational Life Minister, she'd love to learn which role you identified with and help you find the group or committee where that role can shine.

Church Leadership:

- Elders
- Deacons
- Trustees

The above positions are elected, but anyone can nominate themselves via the committee.

Social & Participation Groups:

Theology on Tap:

Elizabeth Tatum

elizabeth.t.tatum@gmail.com

Sam Edgin sam.edgin.l@gmail.com

Small Groups:

Judy Jones jufrye@yahoo.com

Weekly Bible Study:

Andrew Connors

andrew@browndowntown.org

Weekly Prayer Service:

Morgana Kinlan morgana.kinlan@gmail.com

Faith & Literature:

Shirley Parry shirlzepearl@gmail.com

Church Life & Partnership Groups/Committees:

Worship Committee:

Janine Zabriskie gimtwain3@gmail.com

Communion Bakers:

Laura Urban urbanlaura@icloud.com

Ushers:

David Lascu dmlascu@aol.com

Christian Education Committee:

Rachel Cunningham

rachel@browndowntown.org

Youth Program:

Eva Hendrix Shovlin

eva@browndowntown.org

Personnel Committee:

Laura Urban urbanlaura@icloud.com

Andy Ross rossinbalt@gmail.com

Communications Committee:

Bill Sheridan wsheridanmd@gmail.com

Diversity Committee:

David Lascu dmlascu@aol.com

Safety Committee:

Andy Ross rossinbalt@gmail.com

Anti-Racism Task Force:

Taylor Stewart taylorstmckinney@gmail.com

Tom Stewart Stewartom@gmail.com

Ministry of Welcome:

Barbara Cook bawijobe5@gmail.com

BUILD:

Rachael Edgin rjburgin@gmail.com

Tutoring:

Karlin Scudder karlin@browntutoring.org

Ann Teaff annteaff16@gmail.com

Prayer Shawls:

Diane Ross rossinbalt@verizon.net

Handbell Choir:

Deborah Richardson

deborah_richardson@verizon.net

Chancel Choir:

Michael Stefanek

mstefanek@browndowntown.org

Global Partnerships:

Pejuhutazizi:

Chrystie Adams cladams22@verizon.net

Cuba:

Morgana Kinlan morgana.kinlan@gmail.com

El Salvador:

Barbara Cook bawijobe5@gmail.com

WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS?

Young people and even children can and should learn about the Social Change Ecosystem and think about roles they can play in social change efforts. Read on to learn how it went when our Youth Director, Eva Hendrix-Shovlin, recently spoke with the Middlers group about it. **Our youth at Brown are especially insightful about what roles are needed for the future of our community!**

Learning About the Social Change Map and Community-Building With The Middlers

When asked, “What does community mean to you?” the youth had much to say. Wolfe remarked, “A group of people who work together,” while Augie shared, “My community is Baltimore, the whole city!” We could learn a lot from their ideals of community dedication and inclusion.

Using the Social Change Ecosystem Map and activities from *We Are the Builders* (a children’s adaptation of the workbook), Brown youth learned about the characteristics of various roles we can play in the community. By adding a faith component to the shared central pillars of equity, liberation, justice, and solidarity, we compared the roles to the parts of the body of Christ as described in 1 Corinthians 12–19. “Now the foot shouldn’t say, ‘because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body’...,” the passage states. “If they were all one part, where would the body be?” it continues. Just as a body has parts, a community has roles that are all different yet important and interconnected.

Virginia said, “I want to learn more about the role of Storyteller and tell stories. A role that someone in my family plays is Builder. I believe our community needs more Healers.” Augie mentioned, “I want to learn more about the role of a Builder because my dad is one. I think our community needs more Experimenters.”

Isaac remarked, “A role I want to learn about is the Guide. I could assist with people’s jobs and lead the way. My mom is a Caregiver, and I believe our community needs more Storytellers.” Gideon was also attracted to the role of the Guide and looked forward to being



What does community mean to you?
“A group of people who work together” —Wolfe
“Baltimore, the whole city!” —Augie

able to “help a neighbor.” He identified a Weaver role in his family but hopes to see more Experimenters in the broader community.

Clementine felt called to the Storyteller role and described fulfilling its characteristics by saying, “I tell stories and myths that teach lessons and inform people about history.” She shared that her mom is a Healer in her profession as a doctor, and her father is a Guide in the field of education. Clementine hopes to see more Visionaries meeting the community’s needs in the future. Mercy wrote, “I want to learn more about the role of Guide. I can help people with their problems.”

In conclusion, BMPA youth have a remarkable perspective on how we build community together. Wolfe aspires to train as a Frontline Responder to be “right there for if and when people need!” We pray that the needs of our worshiping community are met.

2025 LENT ACTIVITIES & WORSHIP SERVICES

Note: For links to join hybrid events virtually please visit the church calendar at www.browndowntown.org

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, March 4 — 6:30 PM

Gather in the Assembly Room for pancakes and relay races.

RSVP to Rachel Cunningham, by Sunday, March 2 — rachel@browndowntown.org.

Come at 5:30pm if you want to help cook pancakes.

Ash Wednesday Service of Worship

Wednesday, March 5 — 7:30 PM

“Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

We gather with our sisters and brothers from Memorial Episcopal Church for an ecumenical service of worship featuring the combined choirs. This year's service will be held at Memorial Episcopal.

Faith Exploration: More Justice, More Mercy

Sundays, March 9-April 13, 12:15–1:00 PM, Hybrid Format

“Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.” — Hebrews 13:3 [NIV]

Our country incarcerates more people for longer periods than any other, and Black Americans are disproportionately represented in the criminal legal system. During Lent, Faith Exploration will examine mass incarceration. Join the conversation as we explore the history of our system and its unequal impacts. Speakers will inform our discussions about ending mass incarceration, lowering barriers to reentry, and creating more justice and more healing in our communities.





HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday

April 13, 9:30 AM

Gather with at the Park Avenue fountain just north of McMechen St. for our annual ecumenical neighborhood Palm Procession. Following the Palm Procession, join us for worship in the sanctuary at 10:30am

Maundy Thursday Contemplative Worship & Communion Service

April 17, 5:30–7:30 PM

A simple meal of soup, salad and bread is served at 5:30pm, followed by a contemplative worship experience. Communion is served. Volunteers are needed to help provide the meal. Share your favorite soup, salad or bread with the congregation. Choir rehearsal begins at 7:30pm Childcare for infants and toddlers is available upon request for this service. Please contact Rachel Cunningham, if you can help with the meal or would like childcare. To help us with the headcount, RSVP to Rachel by April 13.



Good Friday Seven Last Words Service

April 18, 12 PM, Providence Baptist Church

An ecumenical service with the churches of West Baltimore. Andrew will preach one of the words.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

April 18, 7:30 PM, Hybrid Format

The Good Friday Tenebrae service 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 which 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 19, 10 AM–12 PM

In preparation for Easter morning, come help turn our "sacred space" into a spring garden.

Easter

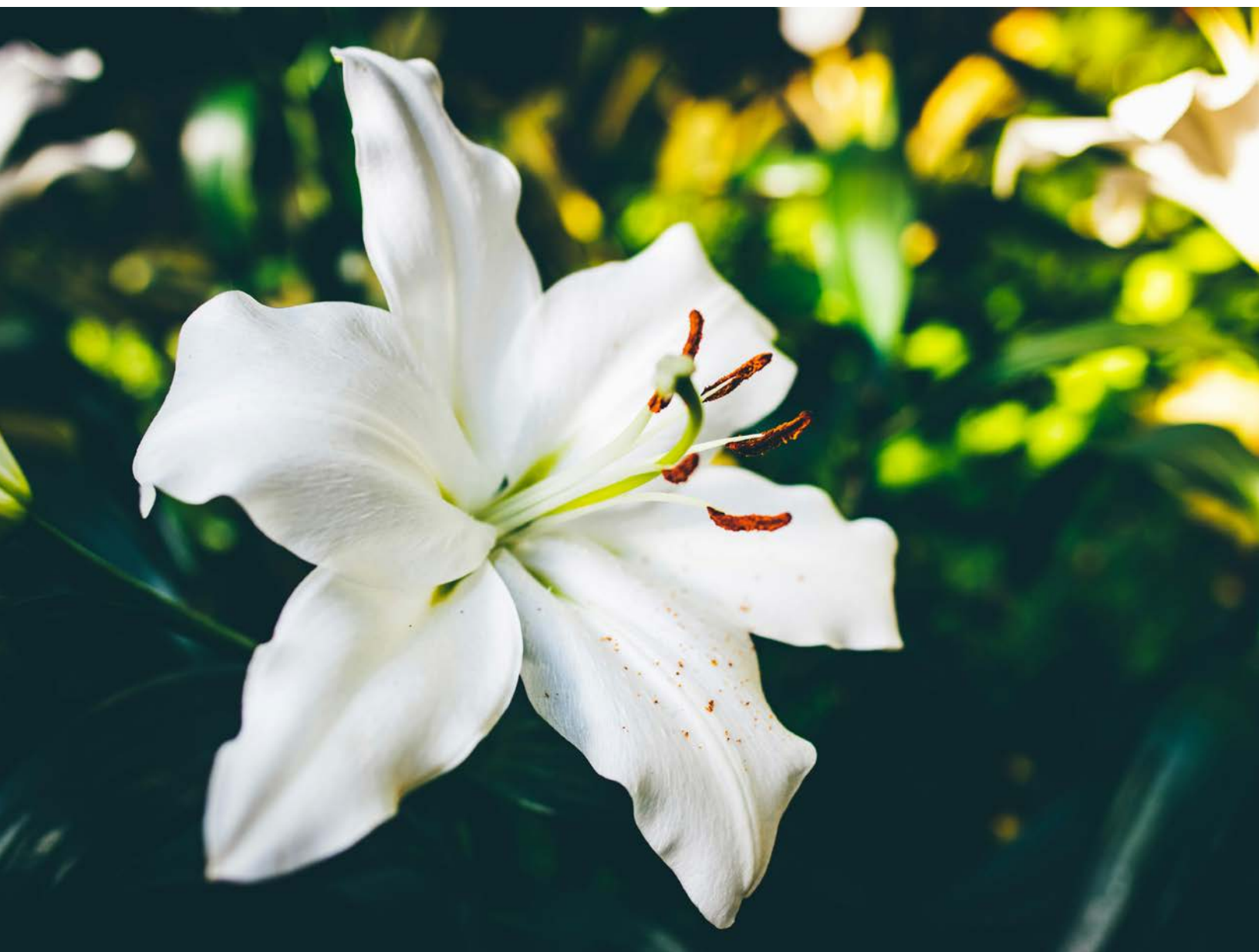
April 20

Sunrise Service, 6:00 AM, Federal Hill Park

The sight of daylight breaking over Baltimore City is a spectacular backdrop to a simple service of witness to Christ's resurrection. Once again, we will join with Light Street Presbyterian Church in Federal Hill Park at 6:30am for songs, liturgy, prayers and good news.

Witness to the Resurrection, 10:30 AM, Hybrid Format

We joyfully celebrate the resurrection in community. The education hour will not take place on Easter Sunday but will resume the following week. Communion is served. Join us for light refreshment following worship.





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TIDINGS

browndowntown.org

THANK YOU & RESOURCES

**A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HELPED
MAKE THIS ISSUE OF TIDINGS A SUCCESS:**

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Ed Hambleton, Rachel Cunningham, Eva Hendrix-Shovlin,
and Angie Alt.

RESOURCES:

*Social Change Now: A Guide for Reflection
and Connection* by Deepa Iyer:

<https://www.deepaiyer.com/home/social-change-now>

We Are The Builders! by Deepa Iyer:

<https://www.deepaiyer.com/home/we-are-the-builders>

Deepa Iyer's Website: <https://www.deepaiyer.com/>

Throughlines by Deepa Iyer (Blog):

<https://deepaiyer.substack.com/>